



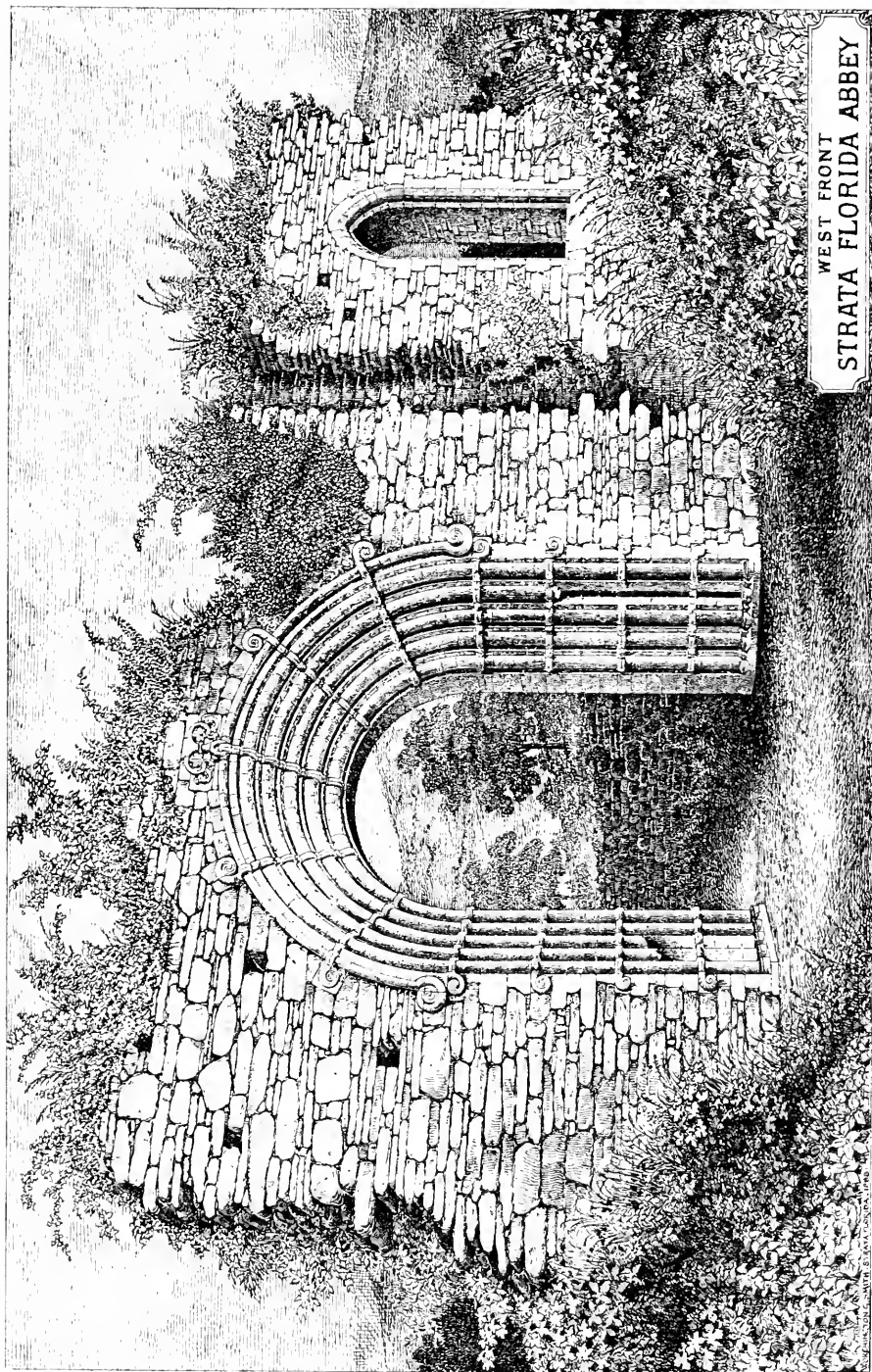








WEST FRONT  
STRATA FLORIDA ABBEY



THE  
CISTERCIAN ABBEY

OF

**Strata Florida :**

*ITS HISTORY, AND AN ACCOUNT OF THE RECENT  
EXCAVATIONS MADE ON ITS SITE.*

BY

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This Book

is dedicated to

Alice, Countess of Lisburne,

in grateful remembrance of kind assistance and substantial aid

in carrying out the work of recreation at

Strata Florida Abbey,

in

1887-8.



## P R E F A C E.

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TWENTY-SIX years ago, in the earlier years of my professional career, I was engaged in making a survey of one of the many lines of railway which at that period were spreading their network over Wales; some of them were ultimately made, others only reached the preliminary stage of the deposit of the plans and the Committee Rooms of the House of Commons. The one I was at work upon was among the slaughtered innocents; it was a line from Rhayader to Aberystwith, and passed near the village of Pont-rhyd-fendigiad in Cardiganshire, in the immediate vicinity of the ancient Abbey of Strata Florida.

I was much interested in what I then saw of the ruins remaining above ground, and formed a resolution that if ever the opportunity presented itself I would endeavour to learn what lay below the mounds of fallen stone and *débris* which covered the site occupied by the Abbey church, and conventual buildings.

Years passed by, and amidst the many engagements of a busy professional life I occasionally found time to pay a visit to Strata Florida for the purpose of fishing in the Teifi Lakes, and again and again renewed my determination to clear up the hidden architectural history of this buried Abbey. I laid my views on this subject before my good friend, Mr. R. W. Banks of Ridgebourne, Kington, who brought the matter under the notice of the Cambrian Archæological Association at their meeting at Swansea in 1886, and through his influence the Society was induced to make a grant of £5, which he most liberally supplemented with a donation of a similar amount towards the expenses of a preliminary exploration of the ruins.

In June 1887 I commenced the excavations with a small staff of men, and in the course of a fortnight's work was enabled to make out the general plan of the Abbey Church and some of the conventual buildings.

On the 23rd August 1887, I read a paper at the Annual Meeting of the Cambrian Archæological Society, held at Denbigh, reporting the result of the preliminary excavations; it was then decided, if a sufficient fund was subscribed, to continue the excavations, clear away the accumulated soil and rubbish from the site, store on the spot the mouldings and other details of the church that were hidden from sight, with a view to elucidate the style and period of the building, and preserve its remains under the care of a local committee for the inspection of future visitors.

The Committee of the Cambrian Archæological Association determined to recommence the work of excavating the Abbey Church in 1888; at that time a fund amounting to £90 had been raised, but during the progress of the work further subscriptions were received, increasing this amount to £165.

On the 24th May 1888 the works were recommenced under my direction. A staff of twenty men, with Mr. Telfer Smith (one of my assistants) as clerk of the works, were employed, and I take this opportunity of bearing testimony to the very efficient way in which he performed his duties.

The works were carried on continuously until the 4th August, when, the whole of the funds being exhausted, we were compelled to suspend the excavations, leaving still a large amount of work that may yet be done in uncovering some of the conventual buildings, of which the foundations remain.

On the 15th August 1888 I read a report upon the "Further Excavations at Strata Florida Abbey" at the Annual Meeting of the Cambrian Archæological Association, held at Cowbridge; on the 20th August following, a deputation of the Association visited Strata Florida, and handed over the ruins to the local committee, in whom they will be vested for the future, and who, it is hoped, may hereafter complete the work inaugurated by the Cambrian Archæological Association.

A sum of upwards of £100 has also been raised by the local



committee, and expended in further excavations, covering the chapels with galvanised iron roofs, erecting iron railings in front of them to prevent damage to the tile floors, in replacing the fallen shafts and some of the other masonry, and in such other works as were necessary to protect the ruins from damage during the winter months.

In compiling the history of the Abbey and its founders, my thanks are due to Mr. R. W. Banks of Ridgebourne, for much valuable information bearing on the early history of Strata Florida. I am also indebted to Mr. Laws' *History of Little England beyond Wales*, the Rev. the Hon. G. T. O. Bridgeman's *History of the Princes of South Wales*, also to Mr. Richard Williams, the editor of *Yorke's Royal Tribes of Wales*, for much valuable matter relating to the founder's family, and to Canon Bevan's *Diocesan History of St. David's*, for notes upon Monasticism in Wales.

My thanks are also due to Mr. W. G. Smith for the admirable drawings of the carved work discovered among the ruins; to Lady Lisburne for the sketches of some of the curiosities found among the *débris*; and to Mr. St. John Hope, of the Society of Antiquaries, for valuable advice in carrying out the works of excavation. The Council of the Cambrian Archæological Association have kindly allowed the use of the wood-blocks and many of the plates illustrating this work.

In the Appendix will be found copies of original charters and documents. I am deeply obliged to Mr. De Gray Birch, F.S.A., of the Manuscript Department of the British Museum; Mr. Ed. Owen, of the India Office; and Mr. E. Rowley Morris, late of Homestay, Newtown, Montgomeryshire, author of several interesting papers in the *Transactions of the Powys-land Club*, for much valuable assistance, in searching for, and supplying me with, copies of the documents which are published herewith.



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## CHAPTER I.

### THE FOUNDERS OF STRATA FLORIDA.

RHYS AP TEWDWR.



THE early records of the Abbey of Strata Florida are so intimately associated with that of its founders, Rhys ap Tewdwr, and his grandson, Rhys ap Gruffydd, that it is requisite to preface the history of the Abbey by some account of the last of the titular Princes of South Wales and their descendants, who ruled over the country in right of being the successors of Cadell, son of Rhodri the Great, King of all Wales.

Rhodri began to reign in 843 ; he inherited North Wales as the representative of his mother's house, and became possessed of Powys in right of his grandmother ; he married Angharad, heiress of Meurig, King of South Wales, and thus brought the whole of Wales under the dominion of one sovereign ; in 876 he was slain fighting against the Saxons in Anglesey. According to the *Chronicles of the Princes*,<sup>1</sup> “ Rhodri the

<sup>1</sup> *Brut y Tywysogion*, translated by the late Aneurin Owen, Esq., p. 17.

Great instituted a new arrangement in the government of Wales, as far as his privilege extended. Cadell, his eldest son, had Ceredigion and his palace at Dinevwr. Gwynedd he conferred upon his son Anarawd, and his palace was at Aberffraw in Mona. Powys he gave to his son Mervyn, and his palace was at Mathraval; the eldest of them to pay tribute to the King of London, and to receive tribute from the other two; and they were called the three diademed princes, on account of their first wearing diadems around their crowns like kings in other countries, before which the kings and princes of the Welsh wore only golden bands.<sup>1</sup> And Rhodri gave the supremacy to the eldest of the three diademed princes, requesting and commanding them to defend the country and nation of the Welsh against the assaults of enemies and misrule."

The princes of these three divisions of Wales were constantly fighting with each other, and the chronicles of the latter part of the ninth, and the whole of the tenth and eleventh centuries, record a succession of wars between the rulers of these petty states.

The Reguli of Glamorgan and Gwentland appear to have claimed independent rule and jurisdiction in that part of Wales, and if they owed allegiance to the sovereign (Prince) of South Wales as their suzerain, it was very unwillingly given, and this was a fruitful cause of warfare between the rulers of South Wales and the Chiefs of Glamorgan.

The princes of the line of Cadell having been long excluded from their rights by the capricious succession of the times, Rhys ap Tewdwr, in the year 1077, after the murder of Rhys ap Owain, one of the usurpers to the throne of South Wales, came over from Brittany,

<sup>1</sup> "Wales being thus divided between these three princes, they were called Y Tri Tywysoc Taleathioc, or the three crowned princes, by reason that each of them did wear on his helmet a coronet of gold, being a broad head band indented upward, set and wrought with precious stones which in the British tongue is call Taleath." Powell's *History of Wales*, ed. 1774, p. 34.

where he had been in banishment, and laid claim to the Principality as the rightful representative of Rhodri's eldest son.

In the *Chronicles of the Princes* it is stated that "Rhys, son of Tewdwr, came from Llydaw and put in a claim to the principality of South Wales as lawful heir; and many of the best men of the country took part with him, for his reputation was great for wisdom and knowledge of government; and being of mature age and judgment, he acquired the good will of the principal men of the country; for no one loved Iestyn, son of Gwrgan, and his family, because they preferred war to peace, in which they differed from their progenitors of that lineage. So Rhys was secured in his government."<sup>1</sup> Rhys ap Tewdwr's power seems to have extended only over the counties of Cardigan and Carmarthen; for Pembroke, Glamorgan, Brecon, Monmouth, and Hereford still remained under the rule of their respective Reguli (according to Vaughan of Hengwrt), though these may have acknowledged the descendant of Rhodri as their suzerain. His patrimonial possessions, doubtless of vast extent, were probably situated in the counties of Cardigan, Carmarthen, Brecon, and that part of Radnor lying between the rivers Wye and Elan, and it was out of these large estates that Rhys ap Tewdwr and his descendants, from time to time, so munificently endowed the Monastery of Ystrad Flur, and its successor, the great Abbey of Strata Florida.

Trahaern ap Caradoc was at this time in possession of the throne of North Wales or Gwynedd, the rightful heir and representative of Anarawd, second son of Rhodri the Great, being Gruffydd ap Cynan, who had been banished to Ireland. Gruffydd, assisted by a force of Irish that he had raised, succeeded in wresting Anglesey from his rival, but not being able to levy a sufficient army to oust Trahaern from Gwynedd, he was joined by Rhys ap Tewdwr; and the allies, marching

<sup>1</sup> *Brut y Tywysogion*, p. 65.

from Pembrokeshire, met the army of Trahaern upon the mountains of Carno in Montgomeryshire, and a terrible and bloody battle ensued; the victory was gained by Rhys and Gruffydd, Trahaern being slain. Gruffydd took possession of North Wales; Rhys was confirmed in his possession of South Wales, and once more the rightful heirs of Rhodri the Great ruled over Gwynedd and Ceredigion.<sup>1</sup>

The battle of Carno took place in the year 1080,<sup>2</sup> and in the same year William the Conqueror, King of England, having returned from Normandy, where he

<sup>1</sup> "After a long march they came, towards the evening, near some hills called Mynydd y Garn, where the army of King Trahaiarn. and his men of Arwystli (*cum suis etiam Arustlianis*), his nephews, Caradog, Gruffydd, and Meilir, the sons of Rhiwallawn ab Cynfan ab Gwaethfoed, with the army of Powys and Caradawg ab Gruffudd, King of Gwent, were encamped. Although the evening was drawing on, and in consequence Rhys ab Tudor wished to put off the attack till the following morning, Gruffudd overruled him, and they immediately commenced the attack, and one of the most bloody battles in our annals was fought, in which the army of King Trahaiarn was totally defeated, and he himself was pierced through his body, so that he lay on his face dead on the ground, with his arms by him, and his teeth bit the grass, and Gwcharis, an Irishman, made bacon of him, like a hog. And on that same spot, there fell around him, of his own retinue, five-and-twenty knights, while others of them were slain in front of the battle. Many thousands of them were killed, and the rest turned their backs on the men of Gwynedd, and betook themselves to flight. Amongst the slain were the king's nephews, Caradog (according to the *Brut y Saeson*), Gruffudd, and Meilir, the three sons of Rhiwallawn ab Cynfyn ab Gwaethfoed. Then Gruffudd, after his accustomed manner when victorious, pursued them, he and his company, through the woods and glens, and swamps and mountains, all that night by the light of the moon, and all the following day, and scarcely one of them escaped from the combat to their own country. After devastating that country, and having taken great spoil, Gruffudd marched his forces to Arwystli, which he devastated by fire and sword, destroyed and massacred the common people, and burnt their houses and carried away their wives and maidens into captivity, and thus he exacted retribution from Trahaiarn ab Caradog. From Arwystli he marched into Powys, which he devastated in like manner, and spared not the enclosures of the churches."—*History of Powys Fadog*, by J. Y. W. Lloyd, Esq., vol. i, pp. 75, 76.

<sup>2</sup> According to the *Annales Cambrie*, in 1079.



had put down the rebellion raised by his son Robert, entered Wales with a very large force, and made a pilgrimage to St. David's, where he received the homage of the kings and princes of South Wales. Rhys ap Tewdwr was then at Dinevwr, and nominally lord paramount of Pembrokeshire, the actual ruler being Cadivor ap Colwyn.

From subsequent events it may be supposed that Cadivor, like Iestyn ap Gwrgan, Regulus of Glamorgan, was jealous of the claim of suzerainty raised by Rhys; his brother Einon took service with the Normans, and a treaty, based upon the arrangement that existed between the Saxon kings and his predecessors, was entered into in 1085 between the Norman king and Iestyn the Glamorgan prince, aimed no doubt at destroying the claim of Rhys to the sovereignty of all South Wales.

Rhys and Iestyn had been at war in the year of King William's pilgrimage to St. David; Rhys demolished the castles of Dinas Powys, Llaniltud, and Dyndryfan, and Iestyn ravaged the Vale of Towy and Breconshire, and carried away great spoil.

In the year 1087, William the Conqueror, King of England, died, and this same year the sons of Bleddyn ap Cynfan (one of the Princes of Powys), Madoc, Cadwgan, and Ririd, kinsmen of Trahaern ap Caradoc, raised a rebellion against Rhys ap Tewdwr, and endeavoured to eject him out of the Principality of South Wales. This appears to have been of such a formidable character that Rhys was compelled to seek safety in flight, and took refuge with Sittric, King of Dublin,<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "Sutric, Sittric or Sittricus, son of Awlaf, or Olave, King of Dublin, assisted Donagh, first Bishop of Dublin, to build the Cathedral of Christchurch in that city, instituted for regular canons in the year 1038. The record of the foundation of the church gives the following account:

"Sittricus, King of Dublin, son of Ablab or Amlawe, Earl of Dublin, gave to the Holy Trinity and to Donagh, first Bishop of Dublin, a place where the arches or vaults are founded to build the Church of the Holy Trinity, together with the lands of Beal, Duleh,

who had married Nesta, one of Rhys's sisters, through whose friendship, and by the promise of liberal rewards, he raised a strong force of Irish and Scots. Having landed in Pembrokeshire, his friends from all quarters joined his standard; in a short time he found himself in command of a numerous army, with which he marched through Cardiganshire into Breconshire, where his adversaries were then ravaging the territories of his brother-in-law, Bleddyn ap Maenarch.

Bleddyn joined Rhys with all the men he could raise; the two opposing armies met near Llechrhyd, on the banks of the river Wye, in the parish of Disserth, in Radnorshire, where a very bloody conflict took place. Madoc and Ririd were killed, Cadwgan escaped, but was compelled to go into hiding; Jones, in his *History of Brecknockshire*,<sup>1</sup> says he became chief of a troop of banditti. But this can scarcely be correct, for we find that in 1107 he is a person of great power in Cardiganshire; and Powell, in his *History of Wales*, speaks of him in 1092 as Ruler of South Wales.<sup>2</sup> His son Owain was probably the man who became chief of the Mawddwy banditti.

Rhys rewarded his Irish and Scotch friends, some of them with grants of land in Wales, where they became settlers. Of this number was Idio Wyllt, or the Wild Earl of Desmond, on whom he bestowed the lordship of Llywel in Brecknockshire.

In 1088 died Cadifor, Lord of Dyfed, or Pembrokeshire. His brother Einion, the soldier of fortune who had taken service with the Normans, with his nephews, Llewelyn and Einion, sons of Cadifor, took up arms against Rhys ap Tewdwr, and the short period of peace which he had enjoyed since the defeat of the sons of Bleddyn ap Cynfan was again broken, and once more

Rechere, Port Rahern, with their villains, cattle, and corn, and gave also silver and gold sufficient to build the church and the whole court.'"—Jones's *History of Brecknockshire*, vol. i, p. 84.

<sup>1</sup> Jones's *History of Brecknockshire*, vol. i, p. 85.

<sup>2</sup> Powell's *History of Wales*, ed. 1774, p. 117.

he was called upon to fight for his crown and principality against his rebellious nobles. They marched suddenly to Llandydoch, or St. Dogmaels, in North Pembrokeshire, expecting to find Rhys unprepared; but experience had now taught him to guard against the open attacks, as well as the secret machinations, of his enemies, and after a hard-fought battle, in which both sides resolutely struggled for victory, Rhys was again victorious; the two young Pembrokeshire nobles were slain, their uncle Einion fled to Iestyn, Lord of Glamorgan, Rhys ap Tewdwr's old enemy, who was then in active rebellion against him. Griffith ap Meredith, a gentleman of great weight in Pembrokeshire, who had joined the rebellion, was taken prisoner, and immediately executed as a traitor; or, as Caradoc of Llan-carvan has it in his Chronicle, "was made shorter by a head".

Iestyn ap Gwrgan, knowing that Einion had served in the army of the King of England in France and elsewhere, and that Einion had many friends among the Norman nobility, welcomed him warmly to his castle at Cardiff, where he then resided, and offered him his daughter in marriage, together with the lordship of Meisgyn (otherwise Miscin in Glamorganshire) as a dower with the lady, if he could procure assistance for him from England against Rhys ap Tewdwr.

Einion went to London and agreed with Robert Fitzhamon, Lord of Corbeil in France (also Lord of the Honour of Gloucester), and cousin of King William Rufus, that for certain good consideration in the shape of so much sterling gold, to be paid to him and his knights upon the accomplishment of their task, he would aid and assist Iestyn ap Gwrgan in destroying the old Lion of South Wales, who had hitherto held them all in subjection, and against whose authority they had vainly rebelled.

Aided by the number, as well as the discipline of these soldiers of fortune, the confederates marched into the territories of Bleddyn ap Maenarch, Lord of Breck-

nock, who had married a sister of Rhys ap Tewdwr, and laid waste all before them with fire and sword.<sup>1</sup> Rhys advanced to Brecon, and joining Bleddyn, the two armies met on the confines of Brecknockshire, at a place called Hirwaen Wrgan. Rhys ap Tewdwr had no chance against these war-trained knights and their men-at-arms, clothed in chain-mail from head to foot. Among the undisciplined Welsh clansmen, he was reckoned a master in the art of war, but the Normans utterly routed him. He was pursued and taken in Glyn Rhoddnai, or Glyn Rhondda, and beheaded at a place called from that day Penrhys. The pursuit was continued and great slaughter took place; they also took Goronwy, a son of Rhys, and beheaded him. Another son (illegitimate), called Cynan, a stout and valiant man, fleeing towards the Vale of Towy, was so hard pressed by the victorious pursuers, that he attempted to escape through a lake called Cremlyn, where he was drowned with many of his men; on which account the place has been called ever since the Pool of Cynan.<sup>2</sup>

This is the account given in the *Chronicle of the Princes*, by Caradoc of Llancarvan; but Jones, in his *History of Brecknockshire*, gives another version of the story, and I quote it in full, as it seems to me quite as probable that Rhys, after his defeat at Hirwaen-Wrgan, would endeavour to make his escape up the Valley of the Usk in the direction of his own immediate territories in Cardiganshire and Carmarthen-shire, unless he was cut off from his line of retreat,

<sup>1</sup> "Fitzhamon crossed the Severn with his troops and landed, it is said, at Porthkerry in or about 1093."—*The Land of Morgan*, by G. T. Clark; *Annales Cambriæ*, 1091.

<sup>2</sup> Llyngynon is a large lake situate near the source of the river Towy, which rises in a smaller lake called Llyngorast, about half a mile south of Llyngynon. The waters of Llyngynon flow into the river Claerwen, the boundary between Radnorshire and Brecknockshire. Cynan must have been endeavouring to make his escape into central Cardiganshire.—S. W. W.

In Mr. G. T. Clark's *Land of Morgan*, it is stated that Goronwy was slain, and Cynan drowned in a large marsh between Neath and Swansea, thence called Pwll Cynan.

which may have happened, and carried by his captors to Glyn Rhondda, and there beheaded. Jones states that—

“The two armies encountered each other at a place called Hirwain-Wrgan, a large plain on the confines of Glamorganshire and Breconshire, on the south-western boundary of the latter county; here the good genius of Rhys finally deserted him, and from this time little more than a titular sovereignty remained with a few of his descendants; after a bloody battle (A.D. 1091) his troops were completely routed, and, according to the Chronicle last quoted, he himself was compelled to fly to Glyn Rhodneu in Glamorganshire, where he was overtaken, and beheaded at a place from thence called Pen Rhys, or Rhys’s Head. This account, however, of his flight and death will appear extremely improbable, if not incredible, to those who are acquainted with the topography of the country, independent of the contradictory statement given by historians of the time and manner of his death. Hirwain-Wrgan, as has been before observed, is on the south-western confines of Breconshire; part of this field is situate in that county, Glyn-Rhondda is ten or twelve miles eastward of this plain, and nearer Cardiff; consequently every step which Rhys must have taken in the flight, as here set down, brought him nearer to the lion’s den. The Chronicle of Jean of Brechfa says he was slain in the field of battle. George Owen Harry, in his ‘Well-spring of true nobilitie’, says ‘he was put to flight by Robert Fitzhammon and twelve knights, who came to the aid of Justin ap Gwrgan, Lord of Glamorgan, but after goeing to aide Bleddin ap Maenarch, his brother-in-law, he was slaine.’ The tradition of Brecknockshire (to which Hugh Thomas gives credit) informs us that the engagement between Bleddin ap Maenarch and Rhys on the one side, and the Normans under Bernard Newmarch on the other, took place within two or three miles of the present town of Brecknock, where Thomas says the village and range of hills adjoining the action are still, in remembrance of this sad event, called *Battle*; a well within the hamlet, Pen Sir Rhys, or the Well of Sir Rhys’s Head; and the lane from Brecon to Battle, Heol-y-Cymry, or the Welshman’s Lane. All this is perfectly correct as far as it relates to the well and the lane; yet the chapel there was not so called from this or any other battle, but being dependent upon, and a hamlet of St. John the Evangelist in Brecon, which church and monastery was a cell to Battle in Surry,<sup>1</sup> this chapel received that name in compliment to the

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<sup>1</sup> “Surry” in original; qy. Sussex.—S. W. W.

religious house to which the mother-church appertained. The fact then, probably, was that Rhys after his defeat fled to Caerbannau,<sup>1</sup> or, as it was soon after corruptly called, Caerwong, at that time his brother-in-law's residence and stronghold, and shut himself up with him. In the following year (1092), allured by the success of Robert Fitzhammon and his accomplices, and perhaps invited by them to complete the conquest of the Principality, another swarm of freebooters entered into Brecknockshire, commanded by Bernard Newmarch, or Bernardus de novo Mercatu, and played the same game with equal success, though perhaps with less colour of right, as Fitzhammon did in Glamorganshire.

"All historians are agreed as to the consequences of this irruption, but none of them have transmitted to us the occurrences which preceded the conquest, or attempted minutely to describe the field of battle where the fate of Bleddin was decided; on conjecture, therefore, in a great measure, assisted here and there by a glimmering of information from the broken and unconnected records of our meagre chronicles and MSS., must depend whatever knowledge can now be derived as to the incidents that happened at this period. In the copy of Cradoc, taken from the *Llyfr Coch o Hergest* (and which, as before observed, seems to be of higher antiquity and more correct than the Aberpergwm MS.), it is said, 'Deng mylnedd a phedwar ugain a mil oed Crist pan lās Rhys ap Tewdwr Brenhin Deheubarth gan y *Ffrancoed* a oedd yn preswyllo Brecheiniog' (in the year of Christ, 1090, Rhys ap Tewdwr Prince of South Wales, was slain by the Frenchmen who inhabited Brecknockshire).<sup>2</sup> If this account, then, is to be depended upon, it may be true that the battle in which Rhys was slain was fought near the village of that name; yet it was not between him on the one side, and Fitzhammon and Einion on the other, but between Bleddin ap Maenarch and Bernard Newmarch. After a survey of the ground where this battle is supposed to have taken place, I may perhaps be allowed to indulge in an imaginary, though (as I conceive) probable description of the encounter. It has been just hinted that this expedition of Bernard was concerted

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<sup>1</sup> Site of the ancient Roman station of Bannium, a very strong position overhanging the valley of the Usk.—S. W. W.

<sup>2</sup> The same thing is asserted in the anonymous chronicle in Leland: "Res filius Tewder a Francis qui in Brechiniaue habitabant occiditur"; see also the Brut-y-Sacson in the *Myfyrian Archaeology*, v. 2, p. 527, which informs us that Rhys was killed by the Frenchmen (meaning certainly Normans) who lived in Brecknockshire.

between him and Fitzhammon, or at least that the success of the latter led to the invasion of Brecknockshire ; in his route, therefore, from England, the conqueror of this county very naturally called upon his countrymen in Glamorganshire, who, if they did not join, at least so far assisted him as to point out the road taken by Rhys in his flight from Hirwain-Wrgan. Pursuing his steps, the invader came to Caerbannau, which being too strongly fortified by nature as well as art to promise success in an attack on the western side, it should seem that the Normans made a feint of filing off northward, along a ridge parallel with the river Escir, as if they intended proceeding towards the Epynt Hills and the Hundred of Builth. On the other, or eastern side of the river, where the British troops were posted, the lane called Heol y Cymri, as far as it bears that name, runs parallel with this supposed march of the Normans. Along this lane the Britons proceeded, watching the motions of the enemy, but concealed from them by higher ground on the left hand, so that, apprehending no opposition, Bernard and his forces attempted to cross the Escir through a wood, from this event called Cwm-gwern-y-gâd, now corruptly Cwmgwingad, or the Wood of the Vale of the Battle, opposite the mansion-house of the late Colonel and the present Mrs. Chabbert ; here, however, they were observed by some of the British scouts upon the opposite eminence, when the Welsh army pouring down the common, between Battle village and Mrs. Chabbert's, must certainly have attacked the enemy to great advantage ; but the discipline of the Normans prevailed, the assailants were driven back, and, in the retreat or flight, tradition informs us Rhys lost his head near a well on the common just mentioned, called Ffynon Pen Rhys, or Ffynnon *Sir* Rhys. The fury of the battle ceased not till the residence of Bleddin was attacked on the eastern side, where it was most assailable and where he himself, as we learn from Hugh Thomas as well as some other MSS., was slain whilst gallantly defending his life, his liberty, and his country, against a horde of robbers, who had no pretence or motive for hostilities, except a savage and unjustifiable love of plunder, or any argument to support them but the sword."

Jones adds a very important note to this description of the battles in which Rhys ap Tewdwr and his brother-in-law, Bleddin ap Maenarch, lost their lives ; it is as follows :—

"Bleddin ap Maenarch was buried at Ystradflur, or Strata Florida Abbey, in Cardiganshire, which was built by his brother-

in-law, Rhys ap Tewdwr, and endowed in 1164 by Rhys ap Griffith, who styles himself the founder, in his charter preserved in the *Monasticon*. Leland, in his *Collectanea*, vol. i, p. 45, more correctly calls ‘Resus filius Theodori princeps Suth-Wallie primus fundatur’ of this monastery.”

Jones gives no authority for the burial of Bleddyn ap Maenarch at Ystrad Flur, but I see no reason to doubt that he is correct, and that after the fatal fight it is very probable that the bodies of Rhys and Bleddyn were buried in the monastery the former had founded.

In Yorke’s *Royal Tribes of Wales* there is a note that—

“In the year 1091, Iestyn, Lord of Glamorgan, rebelling against Rhys ap Tewdwr, Prince of South Wales, invited many barons and knights out of England to his aid, when, joining his power to them, he led them to Brecknock. Then Bleddyn ap Maenyrch, Lord of Brecknock, whose wife was sister to Rhys, sent instantly to him for succour; when, making the best levy he could on the sudden, he came forthwith to Brecknock, and joined himself with Bleddyn and his men; and being far less in number than their adversaries, they very unadvisedly fought a most dismal battle to all South Wales; for they both falling by the sword, left it a prey to strangers, and the welfare of their children at the mercy of their enemies. Then Bernard Newmarch, or Newmarket, a Norman, seized upon the Lordship of Brecknock, the possession of which remained in his blood until the time of Henry VIII, when by the attainder of the last Edward Stafford it came to the Crown.” (*Panton Papers*.)

Mr. Richard Williams, the editor of Yorke’s work, states that from the best authorities the time when the battle took place was 1089, and that Rhys ap Tewdwr was at that time upwards of ninety-two years of age, he having reigned twelve years.

One cannot help thinking that his age is somewhat exaggerated; if not, he must have been a man of wonderful physique. I cannot find in Powell’s *History of Wales*, or in the *Chronicles of the Princes*, any reference to his great age, except that in 1077, when he ascended the throne, he was described as of mature age. The *Annales Cambrie* give 1091 as the date of his death.



By his wife, Gwladys, the daughter of Rhiwallon, the brother of Bleddyn ap Cynfan, Prince of Powis, he left two sons, Gruffydd and Grono, or Goronwy<sup>1</sup>; the latter was detained a prisoner by the King of England, though the author of *The Winning of the Lordship of Glamorgan* asserts that he was slain with his father in the battle against the Normans. Gruffydd was, at the time of his father's death, a mere child; he was sent for security to Ireland, where he remained until he was twenty-five years of age. We first hear of him in Wales in 1112, as having come over about two years before, and residing privately among his relations, more particularly with Gerald de Windsor, Steward of Pembroke, his brother-in-law.

Rhys ap Tewdwr also left a daughter, Nesta, who became one of the most beautiful and accomplished women in Wales; she was doubtless very young at her father's death, and was possibly brought up in England; she became the mistress of Henry I, by whom she had a son. According to some authorities, that son was the celebrated Robert Earl of Gloucester<sup>2</sup>; she subsequently married Gerald de Windsor, Castellan of Pembroke.

In 1107 she was living with her husband at Pembroke; and Cadwgan, son of Bleddyn ap Cynfan, Prince of Powis, who appears at that time to have ruled in part of South Wales, having usurped the authority upon the death of Rhys ap Tewdwr, made a great feast at his Castle of Cardigan at Christmas, and invited the chieftains and gentry of the country from every district

<sup>1</sup> In the *Chronicle of the Princes* this son Grono, or Goronwy, under date 1113, is called Hywel, son of Rhys, son of Tewdwr; and in that year escapes from Montgomery Castle. Possibly he may have had three sons, Goronwy in that case was beheaded at the same time as his father, and Hywel, who must have been the younger, was taken prisoner.

<sup>2</sup> Mr G. T. Clark, in his "Earls, Earldom, and Castle of Pembroke", *Archæologia Cambrensis*, vol. v, 3rd Series, p. 8, states, "Nest had been mistress to Henry I, and by him was mother of Henry, and of Robert Earl of Gloucester."

in Wales ; he also at the same time held an Eisteddfod, at which all the bards and the best vocal and instrumental minstrels in Wales contended, and according to ancient custom he gave them prizes and rewards.

At this great gathering, Owain, the son of Cadwgan, saw Nesta ; being much struck with her beauty and gentle bearing, he fell madly in love with her. Owain appears to have been a most turbulent, ruffianly young freebooter, who only two years before had slain two of his kinsmen, the sons of Trahearn ap Caradoc. Under pretence of the distant relationship between Nesta and himself, her mother being a cousin of his father, he paid a visit to Pembroke, and the same night managed with a number of his companions whom he had taken with him, to obtain (probably by treachery) admission to the castle, laying siege to that portion of it occupied by Gerald and his wife, and set it on fire. Gerald, by the aid of his wife, escaped down a garde-robe. Owain having effected an entrance, after searching every private corner and not finding Gerald, took his wife and her two sons, also an illegitimate son and daughter of Gerald's, and carried them away to Powys, where Owain lived. Mr. Laws, in his *History of Little England beyond Wales*, states : " It has generally been supposed that this rascally deed was perpetrated in Pembroke Castle, but it seems strange that a band of Welshmen should have been able to gain admittance at dead of night into the principal English fortress of West Wales. Is it not more probable that Gerald and his wife lay in the new Castle of Carew ? According to the *Annales Cambriæ*, the castle was burnt in 1106."

Upon this outrage coming to the knowledge of King Henry, he held the father responsible for his son's crime ; and Cadwgn endeavoured to persuade his son to restore to Gerald his wife. Owain sent back the children to Pembroke, but kept Nesta in durance vile at his castle in Powys.

The king, finding that the only way to rescue

Nesta was by taking very severe measures, ordered Richard, Bishop of London, who was then Warden of the Marches of Wales, to call upon some of the chieftains of Powys for aid, promising them very considerable rewards if they would bring Owain and his father Cadwgn dead or alive, that he might avenge the heinous affront which had been done to the king's castellan. Cadwgn and Owain being unable to withstand this confederacy, fled to Ireland, leaving Nesta to find her way home as best she could to her disconsolate lord and master.

Except as the daughter of Rhys ap Tewdwr, and sister of Gruffydd ap Rhys, his son and successor, with whom we shall next have to deal, we need not go further into the history of this somewhat remarkable woman, except it be to tell how she outlived Gerald de Windsor, and then married Stephen, the Castellan of Cardigan. She was the mother of one or two sons by Henry I, King of England; three sons and two daughters by Gerald—one of the sons became Bishop of St. David's, from one of the daughters was descended Gerald de Barri, the celebrated Archdeacon of Brecknock, better known as Giraldus Cambrensis.

She appears to have had only one son by Stephen of Cardigan, but all her descendants were men of might and power in South Wales, and took an active part in the first Norman conquest of Ireland.

After the defeat and death of Rhys ap Tewdwr, Robert Fitzhamon with his knights and their men assembled on the Towyn Colwyn (subsequently called the "Milltir-aur", or the Golden Mile), near Bridgend, where Iestyn paid them their recompense in sterling gold, and they returned towards London. Then Einion asked him to ratify his promise of giving him his daughter in marriage, and the portion he had promised with her. Iestyn refused, and laughed at Einion, and said he would do better with his daughter than bestow her upon a traitor to his country and lord. At this Einion was greatly enraged, and hurrying after his Norman

friends, related to them how he had been insulted; and he also represented how much the principal men of Glamorgan hated Iestyn, who appears to have had a very bad character even in those bad old times.

He pointed out to the Normans the great fertility of the country, and how easy it would be to wrest it from the hands of the tyrant, who, on account of his treachery and deceit, would not meet with assistance from any of the other princes of Wales. They took his advice and returned; and Einion having raised a confederacy amongst some of the discontented Welsh nobles, who had also been promised rewards for their assistance in defeating Rhys ap Tewdwr, but which Iestyn had failed to pay, they joined the Norman adventurers, and in an action fought at Mynydd Bychan, near Cardiff, Iestyn was defeated and put to flight.

The Normans took possession of all the richest and best part of the Vale of Glamorgan, and allotted to Einion the Lordship of Miscyn and Senghenydd, the roughest and least fertile portion; however, he appears to have had the young lady thrown into the bargain, and as she probably brought some portion of her father's personal property as a dowry, he was contented, for we do not hear much more of him.

Mr. G. T. Clark, in his *Land of Morgan*, says that Iestyn was slain at Mynydd Bychan, and that—

“The proceedings of Fitz Hamon during and upon his conquest have been woven into a legendary tale, very neat and round, very circumstantial, but as deficient in evidence as though it had proceeded from the pen of Geoffrey himself. The story, which in South Wales is an article of faith, explains the jealousy between Rhys and Jestyn, resting, of course, upon a woman; the cause of the special selection of Einion to bring in the Norman; the battle of Hirwaun-Wrgan; the death of Rhys and his sons; the payment of the Normans in gold; the refusal to Einion of his guerdon; the retirement and return of the Normans; the death of Jestyn, and the occupation of his territory; and, finally, its partition between the conqueror and his twelve principal followers, and four or five Welshmen.

“By whom, or when this story was concocted, is not known.

It was certainly accepted without challenge in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, and could scarcely have been circulated before the extinction of the Le Despencers, early in the fifteenth century. Probably its author was some follower of the Stradlings of St. Donats, a family somewhat given to literature, whose fictitious pedigree it sets forth as true. What is certain is that, whatever may have been the cause alleged, the invasion was not really due to any local quarrel, but was part of a settled policy for completing the English conquest; a policy which, if not undertaken by Fitz Hamon, would have been carved out by Rufus in person, or by some of the adventurers who, about the same time, were taking possession of Monmouth and Brecknock, and the whole of South-West Wales. Indeed, Rufus awaited the result of Fitz Hamon's expedition at Alveston, between Bristol and Gloucester, and is supposed to have been only prevented by illness from bearing a share in it."

Mr. Freeman, in his *History of the Norman Conquest of England*, thus refers to the conquest of Wales by the Normans:—

"It must be remembered that Gwent had been long before added to the English realm by Harold, that its possession had been further secured by the victories of William Fitz Osbern, that the central frontier had been secured by the foundation of the Castle of Cardiff. In this way South Wales had been either subdued or awed to a degree which had enabled the Conqueror to make a pilgrimage, either warlike or peaceful, to the shrine of St. David. The lands which now lay open to further conquest were those of Brecknock, Carmarthen, the Peninsula of Gower, the larger peninsula land of Dyfed, the modern Pembrokeshire, and the still more distant land of Cardigan. The first great campaign against this region took place in the sixth year of the reign of Rufus, the year famous in ecclesiastical history for the beginning of the primacy of Anselm. The South Welsh King, Rhys ap Tewdwr, was, as the chronicles of both nations tell us, killed by the French of Brecheiniog; and after his time the Britons had no kings, but only princes. This marks the occupation of Brecknock by the famous Bernard of Newmarch. He secured his possession by a marriage with a wife chosen from among the conquered, but in whose veins ran some of the noblest blood of England. He married Nest, the daughter of the elder Nest, the daughter of Gruffydd and Ealdgyth, the grand-daughter of Ælfgar, the step-daughter of King Harold. Of the occupation of Morgannwg, the historian hardly ventures to speak. He finds

a tale so neatly put together in all its parts, a tale which has so deeply impressed itself on local belief, and which has so thoroughly left its mark on the local associations of every corner of the district, that it is a bold step to show how slight is the historical evidence on which it rests. But all we can say with safety is that it must have been about this time that Robert Fitzhamon, of the blood of the rebel of Val-ès-dunes, received those possessions in the conquered land, which have made his name, and the name of his successors, the great centre of local history or legend. The rest of the warfare of this year is to be traced in the British Chronicles only, but its course clearly points to an earlier occupation of Morganwg. As usual, a Welsh prince is found giving help to the invaders. Rhys is hardly slain at Brecknock before one of his old enemies, Cadwgan ap Bleddyn, is heard of as harrying Dyfed; and directly after we read how the French, for the first time, came into Dyfed and Ceredigion, how they kept the land ever after, how they built castles, and from that time held the whole land of the Britons. Among the castles one of the foremost was the great fortress of Pembroke, at first only a rude structure of wood, but which, in its later form, remains one of the noblest examples of the earlier military architecture of the thirteenth century. From this time we may date the Norman or English Conquest of South Wales. The Britons were neither exterminated nor enslaved; while the conquerors and their followers, a mixed multitude of French, English, and Flemings, occupied the towns and castles. Welsh princes still kept up a precarious reign in the less fertile parts of the country, living on such terms of friendship or enmity with the invaders as might suit the convenience of the moment. The local nomenclature of modern Glamorgan, with its strongly marked British, English, and French elements, is the best commentary on this state of things. From this time revolts were common, and very often for a while successful; still they were revolts; the yoke of the conqueror could never again be wholly thrown off. In South Wales, as everywhere else, the Normans put the finishing stroke to the work which the West-Saxons had begun." (*The History of the Norman Conquest of England*, vol. v, pp. 109-111.)

Thus the Normans established themselves first in South Wales, and at the same time Cadwgan, son of Bleddyn ap Cynfan, taking advantage of the death of Rhys ap Tewdwr, ravaged and took possession of part of Dyfed and Ceredigion. Gruffydd ap Cynan, Prince of

North Wales, having marched to the assistance of Rhys ap Tewdwr, leaving his own dominions defenceless, Hugh Earl of Chester seized upon part of North Wales and Anglesey ; while the Earl of Shrewsbury, Roger de Montgomery, seized upon large portions of Powys, including the town and castle of Montgomery ; his son Arnulph seized upon Southern Pembrokeshire ; Hugh de Lacy upon the land of Ewyas ; Ralph Mortimer on Maelenydd ; and Martin Turribus, or De Tours, another Norman adventurer, established himself as a Lord Marcher in Northern Pembrokeshire. Bernard Newmarch had taken possession of Brecknock, and thus passed away the principality of Rhys ap Tewdwr ; at his death sunk the kingdom of South Wales and all its glories, his successor Gruffydd being styled lord only of that country.

Having now traced the history of Rhys ap Tewdwr from his accession to the sovereignty of South Wales in 1077 until his death in 1089, or according to some authorities, in 1091 ; and having observed that during his short tenure of power he was constantly engaged in warfare, the question naturally occurs, during what part of his troublous reign did he establish the Monastery of Ystrad Flur, with which his name is associated as the founder ?

Lewis Glyn Cothi, who wrote between 1430 to 1470, says : “ Tewdwr a wnaeth tai wedy o flwr y vro with Flur vry.” This may be translated “ Tewdwr made (or founded) buildings (or houses) on the banks of the Flur” ; this, followed by Leland’s statement—“ Rhesus filius Theodori princeps Suthwalliæ primus fundator”—“ Rhys ap Tewdwr, Prince of South Wales, was the original founder”—is all the documentary evidence we possess on the subject.

Leland no doubt obtained his information from the monks at Strata Florida. In his time the records of the Abbey must have existed, and he would have access to them, and must have had some authority for

making the statement that Rhys ap Tewdwr was the original founder.

Subsequent writers have mixed up Rhys ap Tewdwr and his grandson, Rhys ap Gruffydd, as the original founder, and have created difficulties by assuming that the monastery of Ystrad Flur, founded by the grandfather, was one and the same as the Abbey of Strata Florida, founded nearly 100 years afterwards by Rhys ap Gruffydd.

The real facts of the case are very simple. Rhys ap Tewdwr founded a house for monks of some order at a place still called "Yr hen Fynachlog", or the old monastery, situated upon the banks of the small river called the Flûr, two miles south-west of the Abbey of Strata Florida, the latter being situated on a tongue of land between the rivers Teifi and Glasfyrwd. He probably established the monastery of Ystrad Flur in the earlier years of his reign, it may be in gratitude for the victories he had won over his enemies, which had placed him on the throne of South Wales, or it may have been in accordance with the spirit of the age, when it was the fashion as well as a matter of good policy with men of position and wealth to found monastic houses throughout Europe. We must remember that the monks were the men who introduced an improved system of agriculture wherever they were settled; and the monasteries were centres from whence civilisation radiated among the semi-barbarous Welsh tribesmen amidst whom they were placed.

Rhys ap Tewdwr, after his long residence in Brittany, was probably a much more cultivated man than many of the rude chieftains over whom he ruled, and in those days one of the first steps that such a man would take would be to establish a monastery in what must have been at that time nothing but a waste of mountain, forest, and morass. The monks would teach his rude subjects the arts of peace, and he would largely increase the value of his Cardiganshire estates by placing in



the midst of them the one civilising influence of that age of warfare and utter barbarism.

Moreover, an inspection of the site of "Yr hen Fynachlog" has satisfied me that a very considerable amount of the foundations yet remain of this ancient monastery. The tenant of the farm of "Yr hen Fynachlog" pointed out the extent of ground covered by the foundations of buildings, also the traditional site of the church, of which, within the memory of some old people still living, fragments of the walls remained above the surface; and though the extent of ground occupied by the church and monastic buildings was not by any means so large as at Strata Florida, it is clear that "Yr hen Fynachlog" was by no means insignificant. The dimensions of the foundations of the church, as given by the tenant of the farm who only cleared them away a few years ago, being about 126 feet long by 42 feet wide; it stood on rising ground on the south side of the monastic buildings.

The river Flûr now cuts the site in two, but there is very clear evidence that the river has changed its course, and that in the olden time it flowed on the east and north sides of the monastery.

In addition to the above, it must be taken into consideration that the fragments of some earlier building have been incorporated in the walls of the Abbey church of Strata Florida. These are pieces of moulded stone-work cut out of a rather friable coarse sandstone, apparently of the millstone grit formation, which have been found imbedded in the walls of the presbytery, the west end of the north aisle, and the relieving arch over the western arch of the tower. The mouldings of this arch are entirely different from any other in the church, being also cut out of a similar friable sandstone, and in very small pieces, as if the builders had worked up fragments of freestone which, having been previously used, could not be cut out to the same scantling as if sawn from the block. It might be asserted that the fragments imbedded in the walls

were pieces of waste from the masons' work, or portions of mouldings accidentally broken, thrown on one side, and then utilised as walling stone; but the piece in the relieving arch on the western side of the tower has been painted in a pattern of red and yellow before it was built into the arch, and this distinctly proves it came from some other building, and that could have been none other than Ystrad Flur.

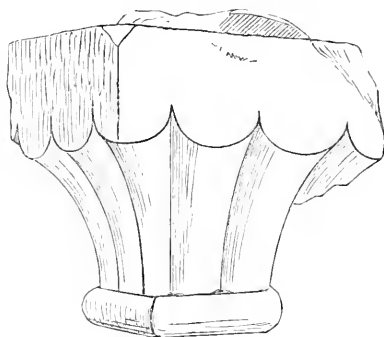
Tradition says that Rhys ap Tewdwr's monastery was burnt, sharing the same fate as its successor at Strata Florida, and among the stones removed from the foundations at Hen Fynachlog are many that still show traces of fire.

Rhys ap Gruffydd probably found his grandfather's monastery of Ystrad Flur in a ruinous condition, owing to the long-continued wars in which his country had been engaged since the death of Rhys ap Tewdwr, and up to the time when he founded Strata Florida.

He then decided to found another and a larger building on a more convenient site. It was a period when the Cistercians were the most popular and prosperous monastic order in Europe. At that time Welsh princes were founding Cistercian houses in Wales, as witness Strata Marcella, Abbey Cwmhir, and Valle Crucis; and doubtless the Cluniac monastery of Rhys ap Tewdwr, as it was called by Camden, became merged in the new foundation for the Cistercian order founded by Rhys ap Gruffydd.

There is no trace of any earlier building at Strata Florida before the foundation of the Abbey in 1164; it is perfectly clear, that with the exception of the fragments found imbedded in the walls as above described, the church was built between 1164 and 1203, as mentioned in the *Brut y Tyrysogion*, and it is most probable that the monks would utilise any freestone they could obtain from the ruins of Ystrad Flur for their new building, as freestone had to be brought long distances for use in Cardiganshire, and would be a very expensive material.

There is one fragment of a capital found near the western tower-arch, which had apparently been built in or utilised in some way, and which is of much earlier type of Norman work than any of the other carving discovered. I am indebted to Mr. Willis - Bund for the photograph from which the woodcut in the margin has been produced.



Portion of Capital supposed to have come from the old Monastery of Ystrad Flur.

I think this is the key-note to the style of architecture at Ystrad Flur. The Abbey church probably resembled Jerpoint Abbey in Ireland, a plain, oblong building with side aisles, with semicircular-headed windows, a simple clerestory over the nave arcades, and a plain triplet at the east end of narrow external lights, deeply splayed internally, of which we have a good example in Llanbadarn Fawr Church in Radnorshire, erected about the same period.

Rhys ap Tewdwr's building, which he founded, according to Lewis Glyn Cothi, on the banks of the Flûr, was a much simpler one than the magnificent structure reared by Rhys ap Gruffydd on the banks of the Teifi.

## CHAPTER II.

### THE FOUNDERS OF STRATA FLORIDA

(continued).

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#### GRUFFYDD AP RHYS.

AFTER the disastrous defeat and death of Rhys ap Tewdwr in 1091, his infant son, Gruffydd (subsequently known as Gruffydd ap Rhys), was sent for security to Ireland, where he remained until he was twenty-five years of age.

In 1112 or 1113 Gruffydd came secretly to South Wales to visit his sister Nesta and her husband, Gerald de Windsor, with the intention of laying claim to the principality of South Wales, which was now held by the King of England. Powell, in his *History of Wales*, says that he came over about two years before, but that it was not until 1113 that the rumour reached King Henry's ears that a certain person had appeared in Wales who claimed to be the son of Rhys ap Tewdwr. The King sent down orders to Pembrokehire to arrest the young prince, but Gruffydd ap Rhys, being warned in time, fled to the court of Gruffydd ap Cynan, Prince of North Wales, his father's old ally, who was his great-uncle, and also his father-in-law, for Gruffydd ap Rhys had married Gwenllian, a daughter of Gruffydd ap Cynan. He was received at the palace of Aberffraw with every semblance of honour, and most gracious promises of support were made to him.

About the same time Howel, another son of Rhys ap Tewdwr, escaped from Montgomery Castle, where he had been imprisoned for some years by Arnulph de

Montgomery, and joined his brother at the court of Gruffydd ap Cynan.

King Henry, becoming alarmed at the alliance between the Prince of North Wales and Rhys ap Tewdwr's sons, invited Gruffydd ap Cynan to visit him in London, where he was received with every mark of honour and distinction. The King bestowed upon him valuable presents of gold, silver, and jewels, and having pointed out to his guest how inconvenient the restoration of the southern principality would be, both to North Wales and England, and how perilous it would be to him to harbour Gruffydd ap Rhys, and having further promised Gruffydd ap Cynan his lands free of tribute, with other valuable privileges, he induced him to promise that he would send Gruffydd ap Rhys to the King dead or alive.

Having thus pledged himself to this disgraceful bargain, he appears to have got very drunk upon Henry's strong wines, and while in this condition he boasted at table, in the presence of a relative of Gerald de Windsor, of what he was going to do, and what the King had promised him; that gentleman at once sent off an express to Pembroke with the news, which being told to Nesta, she sent messengers in great haste to her brothers in North Wales to warn them of the fate which awaited them upon the return of Gruffydd ap Cynan. Gruffydd and Howel fled to Aberdaron, and took sanctuary in the church.<sup>1</sup> When Gruffydd ap Cynan, on his return to his palace at Aberffraw, found the birds had flown, he sent a troop of horse to fetch them back, but the churchmen stood upon their rights and would not allow their sanctuary to be violated.

<sup>1</sup> Some little distance northwards of Aberdaron are the remains of an ancient monastery or church called St. Mary's, and near there is a sheltered creek exactly opposite Bardsey Island, from whence the brothers, with a boat, could easily reach a ship lying under the shelter of Bardsey Mountain, which would be the place where a vessel would lie at anchor. It was probably at St. Mary's Monastery the fugitives took sanctuary. I am indebted to Mr. Ed. Roberts, a native of Porth Dinlleyn, for this information.

While the dispute was going on between the clergy and the prince's officers the brothers escaped by means of a ship from Pembroke, which lay in the harbour at Enlli (or Bardsey Island), and landed them safely in Cardiganshire; having reached the wilds of Ystrad Towey, amongst their own kindred and friends, they bid defiance to Gruffydd ap Cynan and the King of England, and raised the standard of revolt in their father's territory of Cardigan and Carmarthen. Being joined by many of his kinsmen in the Vale of Towy, Gruffydd ap Rhys attacked the Normans in Cardiganshire and North Pembrokeshire, destroyed Arberth Castle, and sweeping down through South Wales, besieged Swansea Castle, burnt the environs, but failed to take the castle; then, having ravaged all Gower, he returned to the Vale of Towy with very great spoil.

He then attacked Llandovery Castle, belonging to Richard de Poins, upon whom the King had bestowed Cantreff Bychan; the castle, however, held out, and Gruffydd, after destroying the outworks and killing some few of the besieged, was compelled to raise the siege, after suffering considerable loss. Carmarthen was next attacked, and with more success, for he utterly destroyed the town and castle, and killed Owen ap Caradoc, the Governor. He had by this time acquired considerable plunder, and no doubt had obtained what was to him most valuable, stores of the arms and armour of the defeated Normans; with these he was enabled to equip the recruits that now flocked to his standard.

The dates of these events vary in the different chronicles. The *Brut y Tywysogion* tells the story as all happening in the year 1113. The *Annales Cambriæ* fixes 1115 as the date of the visit of Gruffydd ap Rhys to North Wales, 1116 the siege and destruction of Arberth Castle, the burning of Carmarthen, the siege of Blaen Porth Gwithan, Ystrad Peithyll, and Aberystwith Castles.

In the year 1113 there was murrain and pestilence

raging in England, and there was great mortality among men and beasts. King Henry finding it difficult to raise a sufficient force among his English subjects for service against the Welsh, brought over a large number of Flemings, to whom he granted lands in Wales, more particularly in Pembrokeshire, upon condition of their taking up arms against the Welsh whenever required to do so. These foreign mercenaries having been sent into Wales, were placed under the command of the King's castellans, and such of the Welsh chieftains who had remained faithful to him. The addition of this reinforcement does not seem to have crushed the rebellion, for in 1114 Gruffydd took Kidwelly Castle from William of London, one of the Norman conquerors of Glamorgan, and ravaged his territory, and after this raid again returned to the wilds of Ystrad Towy with much spoil and booty that he had taken from the hated Normans.

The Cardiganshire men, seeing how successful Gruffydd ap Rhys had been in his attempts to drive out the Norman conquerors, and to recover his father's principality, now joined him with a band of well-trained men. Amongst those who attached themselves to his fortunes were Cadlfor, son of Goronwy, Hywell, son of Idnerth, and Trahearn, son of Ithel, powerful chieftains of his own kindred, who had been dispossessed of their lands by the De Clares<sup>1</sup> and the Lord Marcher of Cemmaes, Martin de Turribus; for King Henry had deprived the native chieftains of their estates, and granted them to his English and Norman favourites.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> King Henry I, in 1107, granted all the territories in Cardiganshire which Cadwgan ap Bleddyn had seized, upon the death of Rhys ap Tewdwr, to Gilbert de Clare, on the usual condition of obtaining possession by the sword; the latter invaded Cardiganshire with a strong armed force, and soon reduced the country, from the Teifi to the Ystwith, to subjection. In order to defend his usurpation, he built a castle at Aberystwith, and another at the southern extremity of the district at Cardigan, and rebuilt Cilgerran Castle. He probably built or strengthened the other castles mentioned above.

Gruffydd, reinforced by his Cardiganshire friends, laid siege to a fortress that Earl Gilbert de Clare and the Flemings had built at Blaen Porth Gwithan, in Cardigan Iscoed, and having taken it with but trifling loss, he destroyed the castle and reduced the whole of that district to subjection. The situation of this castle of the De Clares, it is supposed, was at Blaen y Porth, near Cardigan (see *Celtic Remains*, by Lewis Morris, edited by Rev. D. Silvan Evans, page 38).

Then taking the Castle of Stradpythyll (or Ystrad Peithyll) and putting all the garrison to the sword, he marched to Aberystwith, and encamping at Glasgrug, near Llanbadarn Fawr, intending to besiege Aberystwith Castle, but was surprised and defeated with considerable loss.

Powell, in his *History of Wales*, gives a very graphic account of the attempt to take Aberystwith Castle, and as illustrating the mode of warfare at that period it is interesting to reproduce it in full.

“Then Gruffydd besieged the Castle of Stradpythyll, which belonged to Ralph, Earl Gilbert’s steward, and having made himself master of it, he put all the garrison to the sword. Removing from thence, he encamped at Glasgryg, a mile from Llanbadarn, purposing to besiege Aberystwith Castle next morning: but, for want of provisions necessary for his army, he was forced to make bold with some cattle which grazed within the limits of the sanctuary. And here it may be observed that not only men enjoyed the privilege of these sanctuaries, but also cattle and horses, and whatever else lived within the liberties of them. But the day following, Gruffydd marched disorderly towards the castle, being apprehensive of no great opposition, by reason that he was ignorant of the number of the garrison, and so encamping upon an opposite hill, which was divided from the castle by a river, with a bridge over it, he called a council to determine with what engines they might with best success play against it, and so make a general assault. The Normans observing their disorder very cunningly sent out some of their archers to skirmish with them, and so, by little and little, to entice them to the bridge, where some of the best armed horsemen were ready to issue out upon them. The Welsh, not thinking the garrison to be so strong, approached



near the bridge, still skirmishing with the Normans, who pretended to give ground, but when they came very near, out sallies one on horseback who would fain pass the bridge, but being received on the points of their spears, he began to flag, and as he endeavoured to return he fell off his horse, and so the Welsh pursued him over the bridge. The Englishmen seeing this fled towards the castle, and the Welsh with all speed followed them to the top of the hill; but whilst they thought that the day was their own, up rises a party of horse which lay in ambuscade under the hill, and standing betwixt the Welsh and the bridge, prevented any succour to come to them. And the Welsh being thus hemmed in betwixt both parties, the former recoiling with greater strength, were so unmercifully cut off that scarce one man was left living. When the rest of the Welsh army, that stayed on the other side of the river, saw what number the garrison contained, and that they were strong beyond their expectation, presently decamped, and with all speed departed out of the country." (Powell's *Hist. of Wales*, ed. 1774, p. 147.)

King Henry, finding that Gruffydd ap Rhys was rapidly recovering possession of his father's territories, and that his own forces in South Wales were insufficient, the Normans not daring to leave the protection of their castles, called to his aid Owain ap Cadwgan of Powys, the abductor of the fair Nesta. Owain ap Cadwgan, after his flight to Ireland, seems to have made his peace with Henry, and had accompanied him to Normandy, where he behaved so gallantly that the King knighted him and restored the lands and estates which he had forfeited owing to his having abducted Nesta, and slain a certain Flemish bishop, one William de Brabant who was journeying through Wales. Owen had committed all kinds of depredations and enormities, not only in Wales, but in the Marches, and seems to have been a captain of a band of freebooters willing to sell his services to the highest bidder.

The King also associated with him Llywarch ap Trahaearn, and promised them a great reward if they would take or kill Gruffydd ap Rhys; and at the same time Robert Consul, Earl of Gloucester, Henry's bastard son,

was placed in command of a large army of Welsh and Normans combined, and these advancing up the Vale of Towy were to have met Gerald de Windsor, who, with a large force of Flemings, was on his march from Pembroke to join the King's forces.

Up to this time Gerald de Windsor seems not to have taken any active part against his brother-in-law, but now, being called upon by the King to join his forces to those of the Earl of Gloucester, he scarcely dared to disobey.

When Gerald de Windsor heard that his bitter enemy, Owain ap Cadwgan, was fighting for the King, and was actually then in the forest of Ystrad Towy, he appears to have suddenly determined to avenge himself for the insults his honour had received by the outrage Owain had committed on his wife. "He instantly entered the forest in pursuit of that chief, who being warned by his followers of the approaching danger, refused to fly, confident that his pursuers intended him no injury, they, like himself, being vassals of the King of England. As soon as Gerald and his forces drew near they discharged a volley of arrows. Owain, finding his mistake, with much spirit called on his men to support him, telling them that though their enemies were seven to one in number, they were only Flemings, who would be affrighted at the name of a Welshman, and distinguished by nothing but drinking deep at carousals. On the first onset Owain ap Cadwgan was slain, an arrow having pierced his heart. His death dispirited his followers, and gave them so great a distrust of the King's forces that they dispersed and returned into their own country" (Yorke's *Royal Tribes of Wales*, page 30). Thus died Owain ap Cadwgan, one of the boldest and most profligate of the Welsh chieftains of that period; he is held up in Welsh history as a traitor and a ruffian, and he well earned his evil name; his followers, who dispersed after his death, became notorious as a band of banditti, who for a long period preyed upon their countrymen and

had their home in the fastnesses of the Mawddwy forest.

We do not hear any more of Gerald de Windsor after this event. The Earl of Gloucester's army advanced into the Vale of Towy, where he was deserted by nearly all his Welsh troops, who joined the forces of their native prince, and Robert Consul returned home without effecting his purpose. King Henry at this time was in Normandy, fighting the French King, and with trouble in North Wales and Powys, as well as in the South, he must have had his hands pretty full without further attempting the apparently hopeless task of conquering Gruffydd ap Rhys.

In 1121 King Henry and Gruffydd came to terms, the King granting to him all "the Vale of Towy, the Cantrev of Penwedig in Ceredigion, the Cantrev of Caerwedros, and the little Cantrev, Carthinog, Cao, Myvenydd, and other lands, his lawful right, were allowed him, to be held free; but the King saw the boundaries of those lands were undefined, which furnished him with a pretext to complain of Gruffydd's proceedings, as was seen in the end" (*Chronicle of the Princes*, page 107).

This extract from the *Chronicle of the Princes* indicates the extent of territory that was claimed by Gruffydd ap Rhys as his patrimony, and over which he ruled as chief lord; the sovereignty of South Wales was among the things of the past, he wisely came to terms with the powerful Norman King, and acknowledged him as his suzerain.

It would be interesting to trace the present boundaries of the territory granted to Gruffydd ap Rhys under the treaty with Henry I, as it will be within this district that we shall find the lands granted by his successor, Rhys ap Gruffydd and his descendants, to the Abbey of Strata Florida. In addition to the Cantrefs mentioned in the *Brut y Tywysogion*, I find in Yorke's *Royal Tribes of Wales* that King Henry II gave to Rhys ap Gruffydd "Cardigan, Ustrad-Towi, Arustli,

and Elfel"; as he was already possessed of Cardigan and Ystrad Towy under the treaty of 1121, which his father made with Henry I, this must have been a confirmation grant of that portion of his lands, and in addition the King granted him Arustli and Elfel. This took place in 1172.

In *Y Cymmrodor*, Vol. ix, Part II, page 325, there is an extract from the Hengwrt MS. 34, edited by Mr. J. Gwenogvryn Evans, which tabulates the Cantrefs and Commots of Wales, and amongst them I find the following, which, by the treaty with Henry I, and by the gift of Henry II, were part, if not the whole of the great lordship ruled over by Gruffydd ap Rhys, and his son, Rhys ap Gruffydd, under the settlements made in 1121 and 1172.

ARŴSTLI	C.	K.	{ nŵch coet Is koet Gwŷrtherynon
RŴNG GŴY A HAFREN.			
MAELYENŶDD	C.	K.	{ Keri Sŵydd vuddugre Sŵydd Rumllalld <sup>1</sup> Sŵydd Duneithon <sup>2</sup>
ELUAEL	{	C.	{ nŵch mynydd Is mynydd llythyfnŵg <sup>3</sup>
		K.	{ Dyffryn teueiddŷat Sŵydd inogen Penwellt
BUELLT	C.	K.	{ Sŵydd dinan Sŵydd dŵeflys Is Iruon

<sup>1</sup> The *um* in this word is a guess. John Jones has five perpendicular strokes, showing he could not read the word.

<sup>2</sup> ? Dinieithon. John Jones reads Dineithon.

<sup>3</sup> Leedyfnog.

## PENWEDIC

KAREDIGYAON	{	C.	K	{ Geneurglynn Kymót peruedd Creuddyn <sup>1</sup>
		C.	K.	{ Meuneuidd <sup>2</sup> Anhunaos Pennardd
		C.	K	{ Mabwŷnyon Kaer wedzaos
		C.	K	{ Gwinionydd Is koet

*folio 68b*

YSTRAT TY	{	C.	K/	{ Hiruryn Kymót peruedd Is kennen
		C.	K/	{ Gohŷ <sup>3</sup> Ketweli Karnwyllan
		C.	K./	{ Mallaen Kaeaos Maenaor Deilaos
		C.	K./	{ Kethinaos Mabeluŷos Mabudŷyt Widigada

For some time after the treaty of 1121 was entered into between the King and Gruffydd ap Rhys South Wales appears to have been fairly peaceable, very different from the state of things in North Wales and Powys, where the fiercest family feuds were raging, and every man's hand was against his brother; the tearing out of each other's eyes, horrible mutilations, and murder of relatives and kindred being matters of everyday occurrence.

<sup>1</sup> Y Kreuddyn.

<sup>2</sup> Looks more like Meuneuidd. John Jones reads Meufenyd.

<sup>3</sup> Gohŷ. The *r* in MS. 34 is in a different ink and irregular in form.

This peaceful state of things, however, was not destined to last long, for in 1127 Gruffydd ap Rhys and his Norman neighbours began to quarrel, no doubt about the unsettled questions of boundary before referred to in the *Chronicle*, and a complaint was laid against Gruffydd to King Henry, who gave orders that he should be dispossessed of his territory and lands. Gruffydd appealed to the King, but could get no redress, so he assembled his forces, and being joined by Howel ap Meredith with a strong force from Brecknockshire, they proceeded against the Normans and English, who had seized upon Rhys's land, and put them to flight. Gruffydd appears to have dealt mercifully with his enemies, and, according to the *Chronicle*, "would have no one killed that he could avoid".<sup>1</sup>

Daniel, Archdeacon of Powys, son of Sulien, Bishop of St. David's, intervened on Gruffydd's behalf with the King, and he appears to have succeeded in settling the dispute. Daniel was celebrated as a peacemaker among the turbulent chieftains of his day; he died in 1127.<sup>2</sup>

In 1135 died Henry I, and Stephen was no sooner settled on the throne than he summoned Gruffydd ap Rhys to answer the complaints made against him by his Norman neighbours. Instead of repairing to the English Court, Gruffydd, who appears by the *Chronicle* to have been "ignorant of any ground for complaint, assembled his men in array", and having applied to his father-in-law, Gruffydd ap Cynan, of North Wales, now a very old man, who had probably repented of his treacherous conduct some twenty-three years before, he sent his sons Cadwalader and Owain (subsequently known as Owain Gwynedd) with a considerable force of North Wales men to the assistance of Gruffydd ap Rhys. They suddenly attacked the Normans in Cardiganshire, and drove all the retainers of the De Clares out of the country, taking Aberystwith Castle; and

<sup>1</sup> *Brut y Tywysogion*, p. 109, dates this event 1130.

<sup>2</sup> Jones and Freeman's *History of St. David's Cathedral*, p. 270.

being joined by Howel ap Meredith of Brecknock, and Rhys ap Madoc ap Idnerth, they took the castle of Richard de la Mare, and the castles of Dinerth and Caerwedros, the combined forces (according to Lewis Morris, *Celtic Remains*, edited by Rev. D. Silvan Evans, p. 136) "amounting to 6,000 foot and 3,000 horse well armed, and near the river Teifi fought all the power of the Normans, Flemings, and English; killed 3,000 in the field, several were drowned in the flight, and several carried away captives." The English forces were under the command of Stephen, the Castellan of Cardigan (who had married Nesta, Gerald de Windsor's widow), with his step-sons, and Robert Fitz Martin, son of the conqueror of Cemmaes. This great battle was fought near Cardigan. The fugitive Normans, fleeing southwards, were encountered in the Vale of Neath by the Welshmen of the hill country of Glamorganshire under the grandson of Iestyn ap Gwrgan, who massacred 3,000 of them, the miserable remnant escaping into the Norman castles of the Vale of Glamorgan.<sup>1</sup>

Two romantic episodes, in which a lady in each case figures as the heroine, are related in Mr. Laws' *History of Little England beyond Wales*, in connection with this sanguinary conflict, when the Welsh succeeded in driving out of Cardiganshire the whole of the Norman intruders. Mr. Laws says that while Gruffydd ap Rhys was seeking assistance from his father-in-law, Gruffydd ap Cynan, "Gwenllian, the wife of the Southern prince, and daughter of the Northern one, raised a considerable force, and accompanied by her sons, Morgan and Maelgwyn, laid siege to Kidwelly Castle, the stronghold of Maurice of London. The Welshmen were defeated with great loss, Morgan was slain in the fight, Gwenllian and Maelgwyn were taken prisoners and beheaded in a field close to the castle, which is still known as Maes Gwenllian. Florence of Worcester states that "the dead upon both sides, 516 in number, were left on the field until the wolves collected and devoured them."

<sup>1</sup> *Brut y Tywysogion*, p. 111.

This action is not referred to in the *Brut y Tywysogion*, nor in Powell's *History of Wales*, ed. 1774; in the latter Gwenllïan is charged with having poisoned her husband in 1137. Let us hope that the former story is true, and that she died with her two gallant sons fighting for the freedom of her country.

In the terrible fight on the banks of the Teifi, before referred to, was killed Richard, eldest son of Gilbert de Clare, the conqueror of Cardigan; in consequence of this event the Countess of Clare, a sister of the Earl of Chester, and widow of Richard, a lady singularly handsome, was left in the castle of Caerwedros, attended by many female attendants, distant from every friend, and surrounded by the Welsh, who menaced her with every possible indignity. The poor Countess and her damsels had already felt each horror by anticipation, when they were unexpectedly relieved by the romantic gallantry of Milo Fitzwalter, Lord of Brecknock, who, encouraged by King Stephen and accompanied by a few chosen warriors, rode night and day to the beleaguered fortress, and although he found it environed by numbers of Welsh, brought away the ladies inviolate.

Jones, in his *History of Breconshire*, throws considerable doubt upon this romantic story, but certainly, if such a rescue was effected, it would be in all probability by the Lord of Brecknock, whose castle was the nearest Norman fortress to the scene of the action. Milo Fitzwalter afterwards took an active part on behalf of the Empress Maud against King Stephen, and she created him Earl of Hereford in 1141.

The Norman power in South Wales was now for a time utterly broken, and the King, threatened with civil war in England, was obliged to leave the Welsh to their own devices. Gruffydd recovered all his lands from the Normans; and, having taken Haverfordwest, the only important fortress that remained in their hands was the impregnable castle of Pembroke, which being held by his own nephews, he probably spared in memory of the shelter he had received there in his



early days, when he was only an adventurer and a fugitive.

Gruffydd, at the conclusion of this campaign, which had proved so successful, invited all the princes and chieftains of Wales, from Gwynedd, Powys, South Wales, Glamorgan, and Mercia, to attend a great feast in the Vale of Towy, in all probability at his Castle of Dinevwr, his father's royal palace; and there, in the words of the *Chronicle*, he "provided every dainty of meat and drink, every disputation in wisdom, and every amusement of vocal and instrumental music, and welcomed the bards and minstrels, and maintained all games of phantasy and illusion,<sup>1</sup> and all shows, and all manly games; and Gruffydd, son of Cynan, and his sons came to that feast, and many chieftains from every district in Wales, and continued the feast above forty days, and then dismissed everybody to their homes, and gave honourable gifts to those bards, minstrels, scholars, and distinguished persons of every description that merited them."<sup>2</sup>

During the time these rejoicings were proceeding, Gruffydd ap Rhys and Gruffydd ap Cynan convoked a council of the wise men and scholars who were assembled together from all parts of Wales and settled upon a new system of jurisdiction in their respective territories, and established a court of law in each cantrev, and a sub-court in every commot.

The Normans and English who had settled in Wales, and, since the death of Rhys ap Tewdwr, regarded themselves as the lords of the soil, naturally looked upon these proceedings with abhorrence, and

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Stephens, quoting the above (*Literature of the Kymry*, p. 79), says: "I have as yet seen no attempt to explain what is meant by these words; but that others may not be compelled to stumble in the dark as I have done, an attempt will be here made to throw a light upon the subject. It seems to me, that these exhibitions were similar to the plays known as masks and mysteries, or the still earlier miracle-plays among other nations; and this opinion is confirmed by the facts that in the writings of the bards we find frequent mention of 'miragl' in connexions which forbid our supposing they refer to the miracles of Scripture."

<sup>2</sup> *Brut y Tywysogion*, p. 113.

appealed to King Stephen; he was far too much occupied with his own affairs at that time to pay attention to the protests of the shattered remnants of the Norman party then left in West Wales, and did not even vouchsafe them a reply.

The following year, 1136, "Gruffydd, son of Rhys, the bravest, wisest, most merciful, liberal, and just of all the princes, died greatly lamented;"<sup>1</sup>—such, in the words of the *Chronicle*, is the character of this gallant chieftain, who, in the flower of his age and in the height of his reputation, and after recovering much of the territories which his father possessed, was poisoned, (according to Florence of Worcester, vol. ii, page 88) by the treachery of his wife, which, if the story be true of the death of Gwenllïan at the siege of Kidwelly Castle, must have been a second wife or a concubine. The character of Gruffydd ap Rhys is so well drawn by Mr. Laws in the *History of Little England beyond Wales*, that I cannot do better than quote his words as the conclusion to this chapter.

"Gruffydd was succeeded by his surviving sons. The four brothers appear to have jointly ruled their father's kingdom, and, strange to say, agreed among themselves, moved thereto, perhaps, by the memory of the heroic Gruffydd, who stands out a grand example of a Welsh prince. Bound up in fatherland, and forgetful of self, he fought the foreigner and drove him out, but we hear of no jealousy or domestic treachery; no tearing out of eyes or mutilation of relatives, horrors which in those days were too common in Wales.

"Gruffydd excelled as a warrior and a politician, but he was above all a patriot. He attached his people to him, and taught them that their duty was to stand shoulder to shoulder and drive out the foreigner; while they in return believed and trusted implicitly in his bravery and wisdom. According to Giraldus, the very fowls of the air were loyal to Gruffydd. He relates a legend to this effect. Gruffydd

<sup>1</sup> *Brut y Tyrysogion*, p. 113: Rolls edition, p. 161.

ap Rhys, Milo of Hereford (he who rescued the Lady Clare), and Payne Fitz John were riding together by the Lake of Breckeinoc (Llangorse Lake), when Milo, by way of drawing Gruffydd, said jocularly :

“It is an ancient saying in Wales that if the natural prince of this country, coming to this lake, shall order the birds to sing, they will immediately obey him. To which Gruffydd, richer in mind than gold, answered: Do you, therefore, who now hold the dominion of the land first give the command. Milo and Payne having in vain commanded, Gruffydd dismounted from his horse, and falling on his knees towards the east, as if he had been about to engage in battle, prostrate on the ground, with eyes and hands uplifted to heaven, poured forth devout prayers to the Lord. At length rising up and signing his face and forehead with the figure of the Cross, thus spake aloud: Almighty God and Lord Jesus Christ, who knowest all things, declare here this day Thy power. If Thou hast caused me to descend lineally from the natural princes of Wales, I command these birds, in Thy name, to declare it. And immediately the birds, beating the water with their wings, began to cry aloud and proclaim him. The king, on hearing this singular occurrence, is said to have replied: By the death of Christ (an oath he was accustomed to use), it is not a matter of so much wonder; for although by our great authority we commit acts of violence and wrong against these people, yet they are known to be the rightful inheritors of this land.’

“Such were the tales told of Gruffydd by succeeding generations. The cause for which he fought so gallantly was a hopeless one, but what man could do for the independence of Wales was done by Rhys’s heroic son, perhaps the greatest and best of the Kymric race.”

We have no record of where Gruffydd ap Rhys was buried; a Norman bishop then ruled the diocese of St. David’s (Bernard, who was bishop from 1115 to 1147). Under these circumstances it was scarcely probable that his body was interred in the Cathedral church, and it is far more likely that he was borne from the palace at Dinevwr, where it is supposed he died, to the Monastery of Ystrad Flûr, and there they probably laid him alongside of his father, Rhys ap Tewdwr, and his uncle, Bleddyn ap Maenarch.

## CHAPTER III.

### THE FOUNDERS OF STRATA FLORIDA

(continued).

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RHYS AP GRUFFYDD.



RHYS AP GRUFFYDD, the founder of the great Abbey of Strata Florida, succeeded his father Gruffydd ap Rhys in 1136; he had five brothers and two sisters, children of Gwenllïan, daughter of Gruffydd ap Cynan, Prince of North Wales, Rhys survived all his brothers, and though during their lives he shared the family estates with them; in accordance with the Welsh law of gavelkind, there is no doubt that the title of "Lord of South Wales", which his father had borne, descended to Rhys; and he is called "The Lord Rhys" in Powell's *History of Wales*, and also in Yorke's *Royal Tribes of Wales*. The names of his brothers, according to these authorities, were Anarawd, Meredydd (lord of Cardigan), Cadell, who had a portion of Dyfed, Rhys Vychan, and Owen<sup>1</sup>; his sisters were Gwladys and Nest. Of

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Laws, in his *History of Little England Beyond Wales*, instead of Rhys Vychan, and Owen, mentions Morgan and Maelgwyn as the sons of Gwenllïan; these two were slain in the attack

these brothers, Anarawd was murdered in North Wales in a family brawl, by his father-in-law, Cadwalader, one of the sons of Gruffydd ap Cynan<sup>1</sup>; Cadell and Meredydd appear to have ruled jointly with their brother Rhys, and to have agreed amongst themselves—a most uncommon occurrence in Welsh history at that period. Shortly after the death of Gruffydd ap Rhys, and in the same year, died, at the age of 82, Gruffydd ap Cynan, Prince of North Wales, after a long reign of fifty-seven years; he was succeeded in the principality by his son Owen Gwynedd. In the following year, 1137,<sup>2</sup> we find Owen Gwynedd invading South Wales. It would appear as if he did so in alliance with the sons of Gruffydd ap Rhys, for he attacked the Castle of Ystrad Meurig, belonging to the De Clares, and one at Pont Stephen or Lampeter, which had been erected by the King; and also the town and castle of Carmarthen, he burnt and pillaged the town, carrying away immense spoil to Gwynedd. There is nothing to show that Rhys ap Gruffydd took part personally in this raid from North Wales upon the Normans in Cardiganshire and Carmarthenshire, but, from the intimate family connection that existed between himself and Owen Gwynedd, it seems a not unlikely theory that this invasion was with the sanction and connivance of Rhys and his brothers. In the year 1145, Rhys ap Gruffydd, who during the troublous times of the latter part of King Stephen's reign had been quietly biding his time, determined to oust Earl Gilbert de Clare from his father's castles of Dinevwr and Carmarthen, of which the De Clares had become possessed after the

on Kidwelly Castle, and as we do not hear afterwards of Rhys Vychan and Owen, he is probably correct.

<sup>1</sup> This quarrel is said, in the *Chronicles of the Princes*, to have arisen owing to Anarawd wishing to assist his brother Rhys against the inclination of Cadwalader. Angry words took place between them; the result was, Cadwalader stabbed Anarawd in the ribs so that he died. (*Brut y Tywysogion*, A.D. 1142.)

<sup>2</sup> *Brut y Tywysogion*, A.D. 1137, p. 113; Rolls edition, A.D. 1136, p. 163.

death of Gruffydd ap Rhys.<sup>1</sup> Joined by his brother Cadell, who appears to have been a brave and gallant soldier, they succeeded in regaining possession of Dinevwr, where Rhys afterwards resided, Carmarthen, and Llanstephan Castles, and defeated a large army of Normans, English, and Flemings, who attacked them.<sup>2</sup> His brother Meredydd, who is described as a wise and courageous man, was placed in command of Llanstephan Castle; the Normans attempted to regain pos-

<sup>1</sup> "In 1144, Howel and Cynan, two of Owen Gwynedd's warlike sons, alarmed at the return of the Normans and Flemings into Ceredigion, and fearing the loss of Aberteifi, which had rewarded the interference of their family in the affairs of Deheubarth, led an army to relieve the beleaguered castle, encountered the invaders, and gave them a signal overthrow, garrisoned the town, and returned triumphantly to their home. Within the same year, young Gilbert, fourth Earl de Clare, having resolved to retrieve his Welsh inheritance, entered Dyfed in warlike strength. He rebuilt the Castles of Caerfyrddin and Uchtryd, and having then secured standing room, proceeded quietly to regain many other fortresses, until the chief part of the territories, both in Ceredigion and Dyfed, of which his parents had been dispossessed, including Royal Dinefaur, fell under his power. Contenting himself with this success, he garrisoned all the strongholds, and left the country to the care of his feudatories.

"The sons of Gruffydd ap Rhys then arose with renewed vigour to make fresh efforts for national emancipation. Cadell, the eldest, obtained possession of Dinefaur, and in conjunction with his brothers, Maredudd and Rhys, advanced boldly to besiege Carmarthen Castle, which was yielded up to them on condition that the lives of the garrison should be spared. In advancing towards the neighbouring castle of Llanstephan, the princes were encountered by a strong body of Norman and Flemish troops, whom they worsted in the field, and afterwards won the castle, of which Maredudd was left in charge, while Rhys and Cadell marched forward. William de la Hay and the sons of Gerald de Windsor then collected all their forces and suddenly attacked and invested the Castle of Llanstephan. Maredudd, though surprised, was not unprepared, being a man of great courage and sagacity. He suffered the assailants to fix and to ascend their scaling-ladders, then instantly giving the word of command to his men, they applied levers and overturned the ladders with their living freight, and in the confusion and distress which ensued sallied forth, took many prisoners, and put the rest of the foe to flight." (*History of Wales*, by Miss Jane Williams, 1869, pp. 238-40.)

<sup>2</sup> *Brut y Tywysogion*, A.D. 1145, p. 117.

session of it, but were obliged to relinquish the siege with considerable loss. The next year (1146) the three brothers, Rhys, Cadell, and Meredydd, besieged the Castle of Gwys in Cantref Iscoed, but finding themselves too weak to carry on the siege, they secured the assistance of Howel, son of Prince Owen Gwynedd, a celebrated soldier of that time; he joined his forces to those of Rhys and his brothers, and having reconnoitred the fortifications, found it was impracticable to take so strong a place unless the walls could be destroyed; he therefore ordered that certain battering-engines should be provided, and machines which would cast great stones into the castle, which shortly after surrendered.<sup>1</sup> The result proved that Howel's genius as a military engineer of that period was of great value to the Welsh, for hereafter we find them using similar methods in the siege of the other Norman strongholds; and doubtless Rhys ap Gruffydd, in his subsequent wars, benefited largely by the experience he had gained at the siege of the Castle of Gwys.<sup>2</sup>

Cadwalader, the son of Gruffydd ap Cynan, who had killed his son-in-law, Anarawd, Rhys ap Gruffydd's brother, appears to have obtained possession of some part of Cardiganshire, for he built a castle in 1148 at Llanrhystyd, and gave it, together with the territory surrounding it, to his son Cadwgan. This does not appear to have been satisfactory to the people of that district, Cadwgan acting unjustly and oppressively towards them, and they applied to Howel, son of Owen Gwynedd, the ally of Rhys and his brothers at the siege of Gwys Castle, to head them, and having driven out Cadwgan, Howel took possession of Llanrhystyd Castle.

Cadell having repaired his Castle of Carmarthen, and garrisoned it with a very strong force, attacked Kidwelly Castle, where his mother and brothers had

<sup>1</sup> Powell's *History of Wales*, ed. 1774, p. 166.

<sup>2</sup> The *Annales Cambrie* give 1147 and 1148 as the dates of preceding events.

been slain, and having raided all Maurice de Londres' country, returned home to Carmarthen with a great store of plunder that he had taken ; he then joined his brothers Rhys and Meredydd, and entering Cardigan-shire, they gained all the country below Aeron, and all the lands that Howel had taken possession of belonging to Cadwgan, but to which Rhys and his brothers were entitled as part of the property of their father, and no doubt looked upon their late ally, Howel, as an interloper. They then laid siege to Llanrhystyd Castle, but found it a far more difficult task than they had counted upon, and, in the words of Powell's *History of Wales*, "The young lords of South Wales lost a great part of their bravest soldiers before it, which so troubled and vexed them, that when they got possession of the castle, they put all the garrison to the sword. From thence they marched to Ystrad Meurig Castle, which, after they had won, manned, and refortified, they disbanded their forces and returned to the Vale of Towy with an extremely great spoil of corn, cattle, and other goods."<sup>1</sup>

Thus, year by year, the three brothers were becoming more powerful, and were gradually recovering the castles and territories that had belonged to their father, and which had been ceded to him by the treaty with Henry I in 1121.

There does not seem to be any record of how the sons of Gruffydd ap Rhys were dispossessed of these castles, which King Henry had granted to their father, and they had now recovered; probably, after his death and during the time of the civil war between King Stephen and the Empress Maud, when the Welshmen

<sup>1</sup> "But one point must be specially noticed : the Welsh chiefs had learned from their invaders the policy of building castles, as against the strangers and against one another. During these years, when so many castles were rising in England, several are recorded to have risen in Wales also at the bidding of Welsh princes." (*The History of the Norman Conquest of England*, by E. A. Freeman, vol. v, p. 273.)



were taking part on both sides, the Normans took advantage of these intestine feuds, and while Gruffydd's sons were young and inexperienced seized upon their property ; for in 1138 we find " Gilbert de Clare (son of the first earl and brother of Richard, who had been slain in the war with Gruffydd) rebuilding Carmarthen, and having been created an earl by King Stephen, was nominally Lord of Pembroke and Carmarthenshire" (Laws' *Little England beyond Wales*). In 1150, Cadell, who was very fond of field sports, and resided near Tenby, was hunting in the great forest of Coedtraeth, which lay between Saundersfoot and Pendine, and was there set upon by some Flemings from the neighbourhood, who had placed themselves in ambush, and unexpectedly set upon the unarmed sportsmen. They wounded Cadell so grievously that he narrowly escaped with his life ; he managed, however, to reach his home, where he lay for a long time dangerously ill. Upon his recovery, he entrusted all his affairs to his brothers, Meredydd and Rhys, and took a pilgrimage to the East ; according to the *Annales Cambriæ*, he visited Rome in 1157, and eventually became a monk in the Abbey of Strata Florida, which Rhys ap Gruffydd founded, and died there in 1178.

His brothers took signal vengeance upon the town of Tenby, where those who had attempted Cadell's life had taken refuge.

In the *Chronicles of the Princes* we have the following account of this event, and the measures taken by Rhys and Meredydd to avenge the murderous attack upon their brother.

"A.D. 1150.—While Cadell, son of Gruffydd, was hunting in Dyfed, some of the English of Gower set an ambush to kill him ; and having set upon him, and put his companions to flight, they assaulted him, but he being a brave and powerful man, maintained his post, and killed some of his foes, and put the rest to flight ; but he received a severe wound, of which he languished a long time. And when his brothers, Meredudd and Rhys, saw that, they entered Gower with their forces and demanded the ambuscaders ; and on not obtaining them, they

attacked the country and devastated it, and rendered the castle of Aber Llychwr a heap of ruins, burnt the Castle of Llan Rhidian, and took great spoil with them to the Castle of Dinevwr, and strengthened that castle, and put a faithful and experienced garrison in it."

Under the year 1151 it is added that :

"They (Meredydd and Rhys ap Gruffydd) took the Castle of Tenby by surprise and slew the garrison; for those who had laid in ambush to kill their brother Cadell, son of Gruffydd, had fled to the Castle."<sup>1</sup>

They then appointed as Governor of Tenby Castle William Fitzgerald, a son of Gerald de Windsor by Nesta, the daughter of Rhys ap Tewdwr.<sup>2</sup>

In Powell's *History of Wales*, ed. 1744, we find that in 1152 they (Meredydd and Rhys ap Gruffydd) attacked Penwedie Castle in Cardiganshire, which was still in the possession of Howel, son of Owen Gwynedd, and that after a long and toilsome siege, with considerable loss on both sides, they at length made themselves masters of it, thus finally obtaining possession of all the territory which Howel had seized from his cousin Cadwgan, the son of that Cadwalader who had murdered their brother Anarawd.

Rhys ap Gruffydd and his brother Meredydd, after these series of successes, now felt themselves strong enough to attempt a still bolder stroke; they endeavoured to induce Morgan, son of Caradoc, and grandson

<sup>1</sup> "From thence they marched by night to Tenby, and unexpectedly falling upon the castle, they scaled the walls before the garrison were aware of any danger, and so possessing themselves of the castle they fell foul upon the garrison in revenge of the mischief they had done and further designed to their brother Cadell. For Cadell at this time had gone upon a pilgrimage, and during his absence had committed his whole inheritance and all other concerns in Wales to the care of his brethren, Meredydd and Rhys." (Powell's *History of Wales*, ed. 1774, p. 171.

<sup>2</sup> The Rolls edition of the *Brut y Tygwynsogion*, A.D. 1152, states that "the sons of Rhys attacked the castle of Tenby, and, by a night plot, after breaking the gate, they got possession of the castle, and delivered it into the custody of William, son of Gerald" (p. 183).

of Iestyn ap Gwrgan, who had married their sister Gwladys, and Madoc, Prince of Powys, to join them in driving out the Normans and English from every district in Wales. The hearts of these chieftains failed them, or they were jealous of the success that had attended the efforts of the sons of Gruffydd ap Rhys in freeing their country of the hated foreigners, and they declined to join the proposed confederacy. The brothers being unable to secure the assistance of Morgan and Madoc, determined to attack them; and having divided their forces, Rhys went to Cyveiliog, and ravaged Western Montgomeryshire belonging to Madoc, and Meredydd laid siege to Morgan's Castle of Aberavan, and demolished it, Morgan and his men fleeing for protection to William, Earl of Gloucester, the Norman Lord of Glamorgan and son of the first Earl, the great Robert Consul, who had died in 1146.<sup>1</sup>

After this exploit they returned home with very considerable booty and treasure, which no doubt Rhys utilised hereafter as "the sinews of war" in his further attacks upon the Norman interlopers. Shortly after this, in 1153,<sup>2</sup> Meredydd died, at the early age of 25, and Rhys ap Gruffydd, succeeding to his share of the family patrimony, ruled solely as Lord of South Wales, his brother Cadell, having gone away upon his pilgrimage, took no further part in the government of the country<sup>3</sup>; thus upon Rhys devolved the whole of the vast estates which he had now recovered from the Normans, and which had belonged to his father, Gruffydd ap Rhys.

King Stephen having died, and Henry II succeed-

<sup>1</sup> The *Annales Cambrie* say he died in 1149.

<sup>2</sup> 1156 according to *Annales Cambrie*.

<sup>3</sup> "Cadell ap Gruffydd in 1176 died of the wounds he had received many years before, and was buried at Strata Florida. Though disabled from the use of arms ever since the unhappy day when he hunted near Dynbych y Pyscoed (Tenby), it would appear that the prince continued to serve his country as a statesman, and merited the regret which caused his death to be recorded among the great ones of his day." (Miss Jane Williams' *History of Wales*.)

ing to the throne, one of his first acts, after returning from Anjou and putting down his brother Geoffrey's rebellion, was to invade North Wales, at first with but little success; eventually, however, a peace was patched up between the King and Prince Owain Gwynedd and the other princes and lords of Wales, Rhys ap Gruffydd alone excepted, and in consequence a desultory war was carried on for some time between "The Lord Rhys", as the English called him, and Henry II.

Rhys appears to have removed his cattle and effects into the great forest of Ystrad Towy, and there to have assembled his forces. In these inaccessible fastnesses he at first defied Henry's power, and refused to obey his summons to appear at Court to do homage for his lands, until he received a more positive command and a threat that he would be attacked by the joint forces of England and Wales.

Rhys had reason to believe that Owen Gwynedd intended to lay claim to the titular sovereignty of South Wales, for in 1155 he was apprehensive that a large army which Owen Gwynedd had then raised was intended for the conquest of South Wales, and Rhys had marched his army to Aberdovy to meet the invader. But nothing came of it, and whether the North Wales prince had any real intention of seizing upon the southern principality or not, Rhys threw up earthworks at Aberdovey, and eventually built a castle there to guard his frontiers on their northern boundary.<sup>1</sup> He therefore had reason to dread such a combination, and, like the wise man and good statesman he was, and ever afterwards proved himself to be, he bent to the storm he dared not brave, obeyed the summons, made his peace with King Henry, appeared at Court, and delivered up two of his sons as hostages. Powell, *History of Wales*, ed. 1774, pp. 176-178, relates that :

<sup>1</sup> *Brut y Tyrysgion*, Rolls edition, p. 185.

"There it was agreed upon, that Rhys, whose lands heretofore lay scattered about, and were intermixed with other persons' estates, should enjoy Cantref Mawr,<sup>1</sup> and any other Cantref which the King should be pleased to bestow upon him. But, contrary to this article, the King assigned him several lordships and other lands far remote from each other, and particularly intermixed them with the estates of Englishmen, whom he was sure would be a watch and a curb to all the motions of Prince Rhys. This was indeed a very politick contrivance of King Henry to keep under the high and restless spirit of Rhys; but the justice of the action does not so evidently appear in breaking one of the chiefest articles of the peace, and chopping and bestowing that which was not justly in his power to give. But it is manifestly apparent that the English of these times were mainly concerned, right or wrong, to oppress and keep under the Welch, of whose mortal hatred to subjection they had so frequently and so cruelly felt. Prince Rhys was not at all ignorant of these wrongful and deceitful dealings of King Henry, but knowing himself to be unable to redress these grievances, he thought it more advisable for a time to live quietly with a little, than rashly to hazard all. But in a short time he had opportunity either to demand redress from the King, or else to endeavour it himself by force of arms. For as soon as Roger,<sup>2</sup> Earl of Clare, was informed of the distribution which the King of England had granted to Prince Rhys, he came to King Henry, requesting of his Majesty that he would grant him such lands in Wales as he could win by force of arms. The King readily complied with his request, being always very forward to grant anything which seemed to curb and discom-

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<sup>1</sup> Cantref Maur consists of "Cethineoc comot mab Elfyw, comot mab Uchdryd and Wydigada. In this shire are the towns and castles Caermardhyn, Dynefawr, which was the prince's seat of the country, Newtown, Lhandeilo, Lhanymdhyfri, Emlyn, Swansey, now in Glamorganshire, called in Welch Abertawy-upon-the-Sea, the castles of Uchtryd, of Lhanstephan, and others. It hath upon the west Dyfed or Pembrokeshire, on the north Cardiganshire, upon the south-west the sea, and upon the south-east Glamorgan, and upon the east Brecknockshire. This is counted the strongest part of South Wales, as that which is full of high mountains, great woods, and fair rivers, especially Tywy." ("The Description of Wales," Powell's *History of Wales*, ed. 1774, p. xviii.)

<sup>2</sup> Roger de Clare, kinsman of Richard, Earl of Pembroke, who witnessed the treaty between Henry and Stephen, under which Henry's succession was secured in 1153. (Clark's *Earls, Earldom, and Castle of Pembroke*.)

mode the Welch, and therefore the Earl of Clare marched with a great army into Cardigan, and having fortified the Castles of Ystrat Meyric, Humphrey, Dyfi, Dynernth, and Lhanymdhyfri, he made several incursions into the country. In the same manner, Walter Clyfford, who was made Governor of Lhanymdhyfri Castle, made inroads into the territories of Prince Rhys, and after he had slain several of the Welch, and made great waste in the country, returned with considerable booty.<sup>1</sup>

“Prince Rhys, as he was unable to bear these outrages, so he was resolved either to have immediate redress, or else to proclaim open war against the English, and therefore he sent an express to King Henry, complaining of the hostilities which his subjects the Earl of Clare and Walter Clyfford had committed in his country. But finding the King to put him still off with only smooth words and fair promises, and that he always winked at the faults of the English and Normans, without any further consultation about the matter, he laid siege to the Castle of Lhanymdhyfri,<sup>2</sup> and in a short time made himself master of it. Also Eineon, the son of Anarawd, Rhys’s brother’s son, and a person of great valour, being desirous to free his country from that miserable servitude they now groaned under, and judging withal that his uncle was now discharged from the oath he had lately sworn to the King of England, sat before the Castle of Humphrey,<sup>3</sup> and having forcibly made his entrance into it, he put all the garrison to the sword, where he found a great number of horses and armour,<sup>4</sup> enough to arm a considerable body of men. And whilst Eineon was thus engaged at Humphrey’s Castle, Prince Rhys perceiving that he could not enjoy any part of his inheritance but what he afterwards got by the sword, drew all his power together and entered Cardigan, where, like a most violent torrent, he over-run the country, that he left not one castle standing of those which his enemies had fortified, and so brought all the country to his subjection. King Henry being sore offended at the progress which Prince Rhys so suddenly made against him, returned with a great army into South Wales, but finding it to no purpose to attempt anything against the Prince, he thought it more advisable to permit him to enjoy all he had gotten, and only to take hostages for his

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<sup>1</sup> A.D. 1159. (*Annales Cambriæ*.)

<sup>2</sup> Llandovery Castle.

<sup>3</sup> Humphrey’s Castle, afterwards called Castle Howel, near Llandyssil, Cardiganshire.

<sup>4</sup> The *Chronicle of the Princes* adds to this: “and engines for throwing stones.” A.D. 1157. (*Brut y Tywysogion*, p. 127.)

observing of peace during his absence out of the kingdom, which Prince Rhys promising to do, he forthwith returned to England, and soon after went for Normandy, where he concluded a peace with the French King."

In the year following (1158), Henry being in Normandy, Rhys attempted to take possession of some of the castles in Pembrokeshire which the King had promised him in the treaty of the previous year; the garrisons of these castles refused to surrender them to Rhys, and he again renewed the war, it is said, encouraged by the Welsh prophecies that the King would not return. Having destroyed all the castles to which he laid claim in Pembrokeshire, he then besieged Carmarthen. Reginald Earl of Cornwall, the King's illegitimate son, together with Roger Earl de Clare, having promised Owain Gwynedd, Prince of North Wales, the lordship of South Wales in reward for his assistance, he with his brother Cadwalader, and his two sons Howel and Conan, advanced to the relief of Carmarthen. Rhys ap Gruffydd did not await their coming, but retired to the mountains called Cefn Rester, and there entrenched himself in a strong position, which the confederate army did not dare to attack.<sup>1</sup> The Welsh of the upper parts of Glamorganshire, under the celebrated Ivor Bach, who had taken Cardiff Castle, and in it the Earl of Gloucester and his Countess Hawisia, advanced to the aid of Rhys; the allied forces therefore thought it better to retire before being taken in front and rear, and nothing further was attempted against Rhys until the return of King Henry to England.

In 1162 Henry, with a large army, advanced into Wales to punish Rhys, who took the field with all the forces he could raise; and the King, having marched into Brecknockshire, the men of Brecknock interposed between the King and Rhys, and terms were

<sup>1</sup> *Brut y Tywysogion*, Rolls ed., A.D. 1158, p. 195. According to *History of the Princes of South Wales*, by the Rev. the Hon. G. T. O. Bridgeman, this took place in 1159.

arranged between them. Rhys swore fealty to the English King and his son at Woodstock, delivering up two of his nephews as hostages, one being the gallant Eineon, son of Anarawd, the other being Cadwgan, son of his brother Meredydd. The King pledged himself to grant Rhys the Great Cantref and Dinevwr. The hostages were entrusted by the King to the care of the Earl of Gloucester, who treacherously caused them both to be slain; Eineon was murdered in his bed by his own servant, Walter ap Llywarch, at the instigation, it is said, of Roger, Earl de Clare, and Cadwgan, in the like manner, by one Walter ap Riccart.<sup>1</sup>

Rhys ap Gruffydd determined to be revenged for the death of his nephews, and raided the whole of Cardiganshire, taking Aber Rheidiol Castle<sup>2</sup>; and from thence marching to Cardigan and into Pembrokeshire, harried the country with fire and sword, and swept away nearly every Norman garrison in the district, bringing the whole of Cardiganshire under subjection (with the exception of Cardigan Castle), and carried away immense booty to his Castle of Dinevwr.

Encouraged by his success, Owain Gwynedd, Prince of North Wales, and the Lords of Powys now joined Rhys, and in 1164 nearly all Wales had risen in rebellion. Henry the Second raised a very large army; he levied forces from all parts of his dominions, and England, Normandy, Anjou, Gascony, Guienne, and Flanders sent their best soldiers to chastise the rebellious Welsh. Henry declared he would destroy without mercy every living being he met with, and determined to utterly crush the Welsh confederacy. On the other side, after many years of internal strife and dissension, the Welsh princes at

<sup>1</sup> Powell's *History of Wales*, ed. 1774, p. 188; *Brut y Tywysogion*, p. 129. Walter de Clifford, son of Richard Fitz Pons, according to the *History of Princes of South Wales*.

Giraldus, *Itin.*, book II, c. x; *Annales Cambriæ*, 1164; *Brut y Tywysogion*, 1162; *Roger of Wendover*, 1163.

<sup>2</sup> Aberystwith.



last joined all their forces together for a final attempt to secure the independence of their country. Encamped at Corwen in Merionethshire was Prince Owain and his brother Cadwalader, and all the strength of North Wales ; Prince Rhys ap Gruffydd, with those of South Wales ; Owain Cyveilioc and Madoc ap Meredith, with all the power of Powys, and the two sons of Madoc ap Idnerth, and all the warriors from the country lying between the rivers Severn and Wye. For once, North and South Wales, with Powys, were unanimous in camp and council ; the strifes and jealousies of the various princes, lords, and chieftains of Wales were for the time laid aside.

King Henry encamped his mighty host at Oswestry,<sup>1</sup> and understanding that the Welsh were so near to him, he determined to bring on a general action if possible ; and, with a view to that, he advanced up the River Ceiriog to near Chirk Castle, and caused all the woods to be cut down, so that his heavy-armed troops could move with advantage, and without fear of being cut off by ambush—a mode of warfare at which the Welsh were adepts.

Some of the Welsh attacked his advanced guard, and he himself was in considerable danger, for one of the Welsh archers aimed directly at the King, and he would have been pierced by the arrow, had it not been that Hubert de Clare, Constable of Colchester, seeing the danger to his sovereign, stepped before him, and at the price of his own life preserved that of his friend and master.

The King's army moved onwards to the Berwyn Mountains, and there both sides for some time confronted each other ; the Welsh would not venture out on to the open ground, knowing that their light troops were no match for Henry's well-armed foreign mercenaries and his English men-at-arms. The English, on the other hand, would not attempt to attack the Welsh in the

<sup>1</sup> July 1165 according to Eyton's *Antiquities of Shropshire*, vol. x, p. 323.

mountain passes and woods. The weather fought against the King : it rained continuously, his supplies were cut off, and he could not feed his large force among those wild and barren mountains. Henry was obliged to beat a retreat, and after very considerable losses in men and munitions of war returned to England. The King was so enraged at the ill-success of his expedition, that he put out the eyes of all the Welsh hostages,<sup>1</sup> and amongst them were Howel and Meredydd, sons of Rhys ap Gruffydd.<sup>2</sup>

“King Henry, bent upon effecting the utter extermination of the Cymric race, had marched meanwhile into Shropshire, and assembled at Croes Oswalt a host which he believed to be invincible. Nevertheless, he opened secret communications with his former friends the Princes of Powys, and strenuously endeavoured to detach them from the native confederacy. Finding them to be inflexibly attached to the cause of liberty, he remained for some time awaiting the movements of his foes, until weary at length of inaction, he commenced felling the thick woods, and moved his army onward.

“The pioneers at their head, protected by a guard of pikemen, had entered upon a glade still known as Adwyr Beddau (the Pass of the Graves), when a chosen party of Cymric volunteers rushed fiercely to encounter them, attempting to preserve the wood. Many brave men fell on both sides, and the skirmish ended in the celebrated battle of Crogen, through which the invaders forced their way, with great loss, to the ridge of the

<sup>1</sup> Some authorities say the King blinded his Welsh hostages, sons of Owain Gwynedd and Rhys ap Gruffydd, after the defeat on the Berwyn Mountain, with his own hands.

<sup>2</sup> *Brut y Tywysogion*, Rolls ed., p. 203. Hereafter we hear of Howel, a blind son of Rhys ap Gruffydd, who had long been a hostage in Henry's hands, and whom, in 1169, the King restored to his father; and again, in 1193, we hear of another son, named Howel, whose eyes were put out by his brother Anarawd; it is, therefore, somewhat puzzling to remember which of the sons are intended when the *Chronicles* speak of a “blind son of Prince Rhys”. Meredydd is described in the heraldic pedigrees as Meredydd Iddall (or the blind).

The date of the campaign in North Wales, as given by the different authorities, is as follows :—*Annales Cambrie*, 1160; *Brut y Tywysogion*, 1163; Rolls edition, 1164; *Powell*, 1164; also see Giraldus, *Itin.*, book II, c. x, xii.

Berwyn mountains, where they formed an entrenched camp. As Henry crossed the Bridge of the Ceiriog, an arrow from a Cymric bow must inevitably have pierced him if Hubert de Clare had not discerned its course, and, instantly stepping forward, received it in his own breast, giving his own life to save his master's.

"Owen Cyfeiliog's spirited poem, called the "Hirlâs", has been supposed to commemorate the battle of Crogen. The confederated Britons and their invaders were now encamped within sight of each other, and King Henry hourly experienced the unremitting vigilance and activity of his light-armed adversaries, who cut off his supplies of provision, lay in wait for his foraging parties, skirmished with his troops at every advantageous opportunity, and availed themselves of their local knowledge and mountaineering habits to the discouragement and gradual destruction of his host. Drenching rains rendered the turfy ground slippery and unsafe for unaccustomed feet; men, horses, and military stores had dwindled frightfully before his eyes; and, in the mood of a stricken tiger, he was compelled by the dread of utter discomfiture to effect an immediate and disastrous retreat, harassed beyond the English border by the deadly skirmishers of the Cymry.

"In revenge for this disgraceful defeat, he caused the eyes of all the young Welsh princes, whom he held as hostages, to be torn out of their heads; and Owen Gwynedd, with *Rhys ap Tewdwr* [Gruffydd], had each of them, in the midst of their triumphs, to bewail the life-long misery inflicted on two sons." (Miss Jane Williams, *History of Wales*, pp. 258-9.)

The King, although baffled in his attempt to subdue the Welsh, determined upon another expedition into Wales, and in 1164-5 concentrated his forces at Chester and hired ships from Ireland for the purpose of invading Wales by sea, but, for some reason or other, he abandoned this last expedition; the *Chronicle of the Princes* says it was in consequence of Rhys ap Gruffydd and Owain Gwynedd embodying a powerful army against him to revenge his treatment of their sons. Henry at this time was preparing for the conquest of Ireland, and probably thought that he would not gain much even if he succeeded in conquering these obstinate Welshmen, and, very likely advised, that if left to themselves, they would soon be at their old practices of cutting each

other's throats, he dismissed his army to their homes. Rhys ap Gruffydd, being now at liberty to go his own way, marched back into Cardiganshire to complete the conquest of that district; he attacked Cardigan Castle, razed it to the ground, then seized Kilgerran Castle, and took prisoner Robert Fitzstephen, his first-cousin, the son of his aunt Nesta, by Stephen, the Castellan of Cardigan.

This important capture roused all the Normans in Pembrokeshire, and they, aided by their Flemish mercenaries, laid siege to Kilgerran Castle, which Rhys had strongly fortified; but, after two attempts to storm the castle, they were beaten back, and forced to return again to Pembroke.

Quarrels having broken out among the chieftains of Powys, Rhys ap Gruffydd joined Owain Gwynedd in punishing Owain Cyveilioc, and taking from him his castles of Caereinion and Tavalwern,<sup>1</sup> Rhys received as his share the latter castle, as it lay near his territories; and Caereinion was granted to Owain Vychan to hold it under Owain Gwynedd. Owain Cyveilioc having obtained the assistance of a numerous band of English and Normans, retook Caereinion, and burnt it to the ground; at the same time Rhys and Owain Gwynedd attacked the strong castle of Rhuddlan, in the Vale of Clwyd, and after a three months' siege took it; they then took Prestatyn Castle, and having reduced the whole of Tegeingl<sup>2</sup> to subjection to Owain Gwynedd, Rhys returned home to his own dominions.

After this, Rhys built a fortress at Abereinion, and made an inroad upon Brecknock, where he met with a repulse; but returning thither with a stronger force destroyed Builth Castle, obliged the King's Justiciary

<sup>1</sup> *Brut y Tywysogion*, Rolls Ed., p. 205, A.D. 1166. The castle of Tavalwern is situated in the parish of Llanbrynmair, in the county of Montgomery.

<sup>2</sup> Cantref Tegeingl contains three Commots: Counsyllt, Prestatyn, and Rhuddlan. (*Celtic Remains*, by Lewis Morris.)

to assume an appearance of peaceful complacency, and marched back as a conqueror to Dinevwr.<sup>1</sup>

We have now traced the history of Rhys ap Gruffydd, from the death of his father, up to the time when he was approaching the zenith of his power. After a period of about twenty-eight years, of almost continuous warfare, we find him in possession of all Cardiganshire and Carmarthenshire, with a considerable portion of northern Pembrokeshire, and that part of Montgomeryshire which he had seized from Owain Cyveilioc (probably lying south of the river Dovey); in addition to this, he appears to have possessed a large tract of country, now part of the county of Brecon, adjoining to Carmarthenshire, and that part of Radnorshire lying between the rivers Wye, Elan, and Claerwen. It was at this time, in the year 1164, according to Dugdale, who quotes the *Chronicle of St. Werburgh*, that he founded the Abbey of Strata Florida; but in the notices of Strata Florida Abbey in vol. ii, p. 432, of the *Myfyrian Archaeology*, it is stated that in "1166.—This year a company of monks, through the permission of God, and the incitement of the Holy Spirit, came to Strata Florida."

The *Brut y Tywysogion*, Rolls ed., p. 203, gives the same date as the *Chronicle of St. Werburgh*, 1164, and in describing this event states that—"In that year, by the permission of God and the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, came a convent of monks *first* to Strata Florida."

The date of Rhys ap Gruffydd's only charter of which we have any knowledge, is 1184; in that charter he mentions that he confirms previous donations to the monastery; and it is not improbable that in 1164 he may have executed his first charter to the Cistercian monks but it was not until 1166 that they settled at Strata Florida, and actually commenced upon the work of building the abbey.

We may, without any very great stretch of imagi-

<sup>1</sup> *Annales Cambrie*, A.D. 1169.

nation, assume that Rhys invited the Cistercians to settle in Cardiganshire in the year 1164, and having then made them a grant of a wide extent of land, far in excess of that given by his grandfather to the old monastery of Ystrad Flur, they would return to Cîteaux, and there lay before the head of the order the offer they had received from the Welsh prince. There they would mature their plans for the erection of the abbey, and in 1166 they arrived at Strata Florida, and commenced upon the erection of the new church and conventual buildings. It is quite clear that the buildings were commenced upon a well-considered and definite plan; the site was levelled throughout with accuracy, the buildings were laid out in no haphazard fashion; the monastery was built upon the well-known lines of all the Cistercian houses of that period, and the church was no doubt commenced some time in 1166, and steadily progressed until its completion in 1201, when, "on the eve of Whitsunday, the Monks of Strata Florida came to the new church, which had been erected of splendid workmanship."<sup>1</sup>

In 1169, Dermot, King of Leinster, who had been driven out of Ireland for carrying off the wife of Tiernan O'Ruarc, Lord of Meath, applied to Henry II for assistance in regaining his kingdom. The King at that time not caring to interfere personally, allowed Richard de Clare, Earl of Pembroke and Lord of Chepstow, to organise an expedition to aid the Irish King, which led, eventually, to the conquest of Ireland by the English. Rhys ap Gruffydd was under obligations to the family of Dermot, for we have seen how it was by the aid of the Kings of Leinster that his father and grandfather had been restored to their patrimony, and that his father resided during the earlier years of his life, and had been educated, in Ireland. He therefore released his cousin Robert Fitz Stephen so that he might join the expedition.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Brut y Tywysogion*, Rolls ed., A.D. 1201, p. 257.

<sup>2</sup> Miss Jane Williams, in her *History of Wales*, states that it was

Rhys was now at peace with the Normans on his borders, and no doubt was glad to assist them in fitting out their expedition to Ireland, thus getting rid of his troublesome and warlike neighbours; and, according to the *Chronicle of the Princes*, "they were joined by many of the disaffected Welsh, who were jealous of the success of Rhys, and the power which he had acquired in South Wales."

The feud between Owain Cyveilioc and Rhys ap Gruffydd still continued. Owain again assembled his forces, and endeavoured to regain the territory which Rhys had wrested from him, but was unsuccessful. Rhys invaded Cyveilioc, defeated Owain, but did not ravage his lands, contenting himself with taking hostages from Owain for his future good behaviour.<sup>1</sup>

King Henry II having now determined on the conquest of Ireland, collected a large force at Newnham, near Gloucester, and, marching through South Wales, assembled a great flotilla at Milford Haven, from whence he sailed to Ireland on the 17th October 1171, with 500 gentlemen-at-arms and their retainers, and a large body of horsemen and archers.

While the King was at Cardiff, Rhys ap Gruffydd visited him, unattended by any retinue or following, trusting entirely to the King's honour, and there did homage for his lands, and offered to supply the King's forces with abundant stores of provisions.

The King rewarded Rhys for the trust that he had placed in his good faith, confirmed him in all his possessions in Cardigan and Ystrad Towy, and also granted to him in addition the Cantrefs of Arywstli and Elfael.

Rhys accompanied the King to Whitland, and there entertained Henry and his courtiers at a great feast, and, as we learn from the *Chronicle of the Princes*,

in 1168 that Robert Fitzstephen was released, upon condition of resigning all his lands in Wales to Prince Rhys, and went to Ireland to succour Dermot, the son of Murchat.

<sup>1</sup> *Brut y Tywysogion*, Rolls ed., A.D. 1171, p. 211.

“he gave to the King a supply for himself and forces of four hundred fat cattle, and as much corn, mead, and bragawd as could be procured in his territory.”

Powell, in his *History of Wales*, ed. 1774, p. 198, says that “Rhys promised to his Majesty three hundred horses and four thousand oxen towards the conquest of Ireland, for the sure payment of which he delivered fourteen pledges.” This was certainly a most princely contribution, and one that could only have been given by a man of the great power and influence that Rhys ap Gruffydd possessed at that time. Among what a large number of Welsh tenants occupying his vast estates must this great subsidy have been gathered, for no doubt pretty well all payments were then made in kind, the Welsh princes having no coinage of their own, and English gold and silver being a scarce commodity in Wales at that period.

A pestilence having broken out amongst Henry’s forces in Ireland, he was compelled to return somewhat speedily to England, and, landing at Pembroke, was again met by Rhys, who, renewing his allegiance to the King, with whom he had now become a favourite, a friendship sprang up between them, dating from this time, which lasted until Henry’s death.<sup>1</sup>

The King now released Rhys’s son, Howel, whom he had held so long as a hostage, and had caused to be deprived of his sight. The poor blinded youth was allowed to return to his home, and eventually this son was the means of releasing his father from prison, after he had been incarcerated in his old age by two of his other rebellious and ungrateful sons. The King also created Rhys Chief Justice of all South Wales.

<sup>1</sup> “Rhys was highly esteemed by Henry II, insomuch that, whenever he came to his Court, the King always in person, with his nobles, was wont to receive him. But, after the death of Henry, the Lord Rhys coming to England, Richard I did not honour him as his father was wont to do. Rhys was much displeased, and returned home without speaking to the King. This happened at Oxford.” (Yorke’s *Royal Tribes of Wales*, Note 2, p. 36.)



The result of this politic move on the part of King Henry was soon apparent, for shortly after this Rhys brought all those lords and chieftains of South Wales who had been at enmity with the King to do him homage at Gloucester. Among these were some of his own kindred, namely, Cadwallon ap Madoc of Maelienydd, the founder of Abbey-Cwmhir; his cousin, Eioneon Clyd of Elfael, and Eioneon ap Rhys of Gwarthrenion, his sons-in-law; Morgan ap Caradoc ap Iestyn of Glamorgan, the grandson of that Iestyn ap Gwrgan who had slain old Rhys ap Tewdwr; Gruffydd ap Ivor ap Meiric of Senghenydd, descendant of the traitor Eioneon, who brought the Normans into Glamorgan; and Sitsyllt ap Dyfnwal of Higher Gwent. These last three had married sisters of Rhys ap Gruffydd, and it is apparent that Rhys had consolidated his power in South Wales by a series of intermarriages with his most powerful neighbours.

Rhys was now at the very summit of his power. All South Wales was at peace. He ruled over the entire country as the King's Chief Justice, and he claimed from the native chieftains their allegiance as the representative of the old royal line of South Wales; and although by the English he was only styled "The Lord Rhys", among his own countrymen he was Prince Rhys ap Gruffydd, the rightful wearer of the golden diadem, one of "Y Tri Tywysoc Taleathioc", or the three crowned princes of Wales.

Rhys, following the example of his father, now (1176) "Made a great feast at Christmas at his Castle of Cardigan, on finishing that fortress,"<sup>1</sup> which he caused to be proclaimed throughout all Britain a year and a day beforehand. Thither came many strangers,

<sup>1</sup> "And in that summer (1171) the Lord Rhys built the castle of Aberteifi (Cardigan) with stone and mortar, which he had previously demolished when he took it from the Earl of Clare, and removed (captured) Robert, son of Stephen, by Nest, the daughter of Rhys, son of Tewdwr." (*Brut y Tywysogion*, Rolls edit., p. 213.)

which were honourably received and worthily entertained, so that no man departed discontented. And among deeds of arms and other shows, Rhys caused all the poets of Wales, which are makers of songs and recorders of gentlemen's pedigrees and arms, to come thither; and provided chairs for them to be set in his hall, where they should dispute together, to try their cunning and gift in their faculties; where great rewards and rich gifts were appointed for the overcomers. Among them they of North Wales won the prize of poetry; and among the musicians, Rhys's own household-men, and in particular the son of Eytyn the Crythor, were accounted the best."—*Guttyn Owain*, Herald, Bard, and Historian, lived at Strata Florida, and was buried there in 1480.

While Rhys entertained his numerous visitors, the quarrels, strifes, and jealousies of the rival factions of Normans and Welsh in South Wales were for the time laid aside; but no sooner was the period of feasting over than they again broke out, and a party of Normans and Flemings lay in wait on the hills of Cwmdauddwr for Rhys ap Gruffydd's two sons-in-law, Morgan ap Meredith and Eineon Clyd, Lord of Elfael (brother of Cadwallon ap Madoc, Lord of Maelienydd),<sup>1</sup> who were returning from the great gathering at Cardigan to their homes in Radnorshire.

It is supposed that the assassins lay in wait in the woods of Llawrddlerw, near the town of Rhayader, and that the two chieftains were murdered at the place on the summit of the hill where now stands erect a huge stone, having upon it a rudely carved cross.<sup>2</sup>

This base assassination, it is probable, was committed at the instigation of Reginald de Mortimer,

<sup>1</sup> Cadwallon ap Madoc and Eineon Clyd were the sons of Madoc ap Idnerth, who was a cousin of Rhys ap Gruffydd. Cadwallon founded the Cistercian Abbey of Cwmhir in Radnorshire, A.D. 1143. (Rees' *History of Abbey Cwmhir*, p. 67.)

<sup>2</sup> *Myfyrrian Archæology*, vol. ii, p. 523; Wynne's *History of Wales*, p. 206.

who at that time was at feud with the lords of Maelienydd and Elfael, and had already seized upon a considerable slice of their territory, the Mortimers eventually dispossessing their descendants entirely of their estates in Radnorshire.

Rhys ap Gruffydd, immediately after the murder of his sons-in-law, invaded the territory of Mortimer and ravaged his lands in Maelienydd,<sup>1</sup> and, with a view to protect his eastern frontier and to overawe the encroaching Normans, set about building a castle at Rhayader, overhanging the banks of the River Wye, a little above the place where the bridge crosses the river. Of the superstructure not a vestige remains. The Rev. Jonathan Williams, in his *History of Radnorshire*, written in the early part of the present century, says that "he remembered seeing many large stones, the foundations of its walls, upon the site, and that the original foundation of the castle could then be traced." At present all that remains is the deep fosse, cut in the solid rock, which must have been a work of great labour before the introduction of gunpowder for blasting. There is a curious story in connection with the Castle of Rhayader in Giraldus Cambrensis' *Itinerary through Wales* (Sir R. C. Hoare's edit., vol. i, f. 5); it states that "at Elevein,<sup>2</sup> in the Church of Glascum<sup>3</sup> (a small village in a mountainous and retired situation between Buallt in Brecknockshire and Kington in Herefordshire), is a portable bell, endowed with great virtues, called 'Bangu', and said to have belonged to St. David. A certain woman secretly conveyed this bell to her husband (who was confined in the Castle of Rhacdergwn,<sup>4</sup> near to Warthemon,<sup>5</sup> which Rhys, son of Gruffydd, had lately built), for the purpose of his deliverance. The keepers

<sup>1</sup> Maelienydd belonged to the principality of Powys, and contained the Commots of Ceri, Swydd-y-Gro, Rhiwalahlt, and Glyn Ieithon. (*Celtic Remains*, by Lewis Morris.)

<sup>2</sup> Elfael.

<sup>3</sup> Glascwm.

<sup>4</sup> Rhayadergwy.

<sup>5</sup> Gwarthrenion, one of the three Commots of Cantref Arwystli.

of the castle not only refused to liberate him for this consideration, but seized and detained the bell; and on the same night, by divine vengeance, the whole town, with the exception of the wall on which the bell hung, was consumed by fire."

Sir R. C. Hoare (*ib.*, p. 22) adds that "the bangu was a hand-bell, kept in all Welsh churches before the Reformation, which the clerk or sexton took to the houses of the deceased on the day of the funeral. When the procession began a psalm was sung. The bellman then sounded his bell in a solemn manner for some time, till another psalm was concluded; and he again sounded it at intervals till the funeral arrived at the church. The bangu was at this period deemed sacred, which accounts for the superstitious attributes given it by Giraldus."

In 1178 a war broke out between Rhys ap Gruffydd and the sons of Cynan, a son of Owain Gwynedd. They laid siege to his new Castle of Rhayader, but failed to take it, and very shortly after Rhys encountered them in the field and put them to shameful flight.<sup>1</sup> It is not unlikely that this dispute between Owain Gwynedd's grandsons and Rhys arose through the latter building Rhayader Castle just over the border in Arwystli and on the eastern bank of the River Wye. The Wye was the boundary at that point between South Wales and Powys. Cantref Arwystli was claimed by the Princes of Gwynedd, but it had been granted, together with Elfael, to Rhys by King Henry in 1171, and no doubt Rhys wished to secure his rights as chief lord by erecting a fortress that would command the approaches into Arwystli and Elfael, and in the principal town of that district.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Brut y Tywysogion*, p 139.

<sup>2</sup> Prince Rhys reserved out of his donation to the Monastery of Strata Florida a considerable tract of land in the parish of Llan-saintffraid, Cwmdauidwr, and in the immediate vicinity of the Castle of Rhayader, for the purpose of provisioning the Castle, and being a well-wooded country, it would also supply timber for its repair.

It was at Rhayader, in 1184, that Rhys ap Gruffydd confirmed his previous grants to the Abbey of Strata Florida, and, in the words of his charter, "in the presence of many of our army in the Church of St. Bridget at Rhayader", he confirms his previous donations, and sets forth in considerable detail the boundaries of the large estates he granted to the monastery which he had founded twenty years previously.

There are two churches at Rhayader ; one, the parish church of Llansaintffraid, Cwmdauddwr, dedicated to St. Bridget, is situated on the west bank of the River Wye ; the other, the parish church, standing on the east bank, dedicated to St. Clement, is within the boundary of what was probably some portion of the outworks of the Castle. It is a chapelry of the parish of Nantmel, and may have been originally the Castle chapel.

It is therefore probable that it was in the Church of St. Bridget of Cwmdauddwr<sup>1</sup> that Rhys ap Gruffydd confirmed his charter to the Abbey of Strata Florida. The church is situated in that portion of the parish which was not granted to the Abbey, but reserved as a demesne for the Castle of Rhayader, and therefore may well have been called "the Church of St. Bridget at Rhayader", it being in the immediate vicinity of the town and castle, the outworks of which were probably carried near the present church, where there is an artificial mound called "Domen Llansaintffraid", commanding the ford through the river just below the rapids, and which, before the construction of the bridge, was the original access to the town on that side.

It was here that Rhys, with his three sons,

<sup>1</sup> The Church of St. Bridget stands in an extensive graveyard, and there is ample space of level ground around the church for the assembly of a large number of people. This is not the case with the Church of St. Clement ; the space there is, and always must have been, very confined.

Gruffydd, Rhys, and Meredydd, in the presence of his civil and military officers and of some of the chieftains of the district, and a numerous assemblage of his retainers, gave to the Abbey of Strata Florida a large portion of those extensive possessions which they and their successors enjoyed until the dissolution of the monasteries in the time of Henry VIII.

Rhys ap Gruffydd found his appointment of the King's Chief Justice in South Wales by no means a pleasant and agreeable sinecure. Norman barons broke the peace by murdering Welsh nobles and their families: and the Welshmen retaliated in kind; so that he failed to keep order between the turbulent and grasping Normans, and the equally turbulent and vindictive Welshmen. In 1184<sup>1</sup> Ranulph de la Poer, Lord of Abergavenny and Viscount of Gloucester, together with William de Breos of Hereford, who, a short time before, had most treacherously murdered several of the native nobles whom he had invited to partake of his hospitality, were occupied in building a castle at Llandingat in Gwent, when they were attacked by some of the relatives of the murdered chiefs and were driven into their entrenchments. Ranulph was slain, with nine other nobles of the Marches, and many other warriors; De Breos was captured, but was rescued by his retainers, and escaped the punishment he so well deserved.<sup>2</sup>

King Henry, infuriated by a deed which had insulted his authority in the person of his sheriff, levied an army to reduce South Wales to subserviency; but Rhys ap Gruffydd, whom Powell, in his *History of Wales*, describes as "a subtile and a politick prince", obtained a safe conduct from Henry, met him at Worcester, renewed his oath of allegiance, promised to send hostages for the maintenance of order, and persuaded the King to abandon his hostile purpose. The promise of sending fresh hostages was not, how-

<sup>1</sup> *Brut y Tywysogion*, Rolls ed., A.D. 1182.

<sup>2</sup> Giraldus, *Itin.*, Book i, c. 4.

ever, fulfilled, for the son and nephews whom Rhys had destined for that peril obstinately refused to submit to the cruel hazard of being maimed and murdered like their predecessors.

After this, and until the close of Henry the Second's reign, matters appear to have settled down in Wales, and the next two years were remarkable only for acts of violence perpetrated by the Welsh upon each other. Cadwalader, a son of Rhys ap Gruffydd, was privately assassinated in West Wales and buried at Whitland Abbey; the North Wales princes murdering and putting out each other's eyes, in accordance with the prevalent practice of those times.

In 1188 a memorable event happened in Wales—the preaching of the Crusade, by Baldwin, Archbishop of Canterbury and Papal legate; attended by a great train of ecclesiastics, and accompanied by Giraldus Cambrensis, who was ordered by King Henry to act as guide to the mission, and who, in his *Itinerary*, has left us a most interesting account of the country, its people, and their manners and customs at that period.

The Archbishop set forth from Hereford,<sup>1</sup> attended by Ranulph de Glanville, Chief Justiciary of England, Peter de Leia, Bishop of St. David's, and Alexander, Archdeacon of Bangor, the appointed interpreter.

Rhys ap Gruffydd met the Archbishop at the place now called New Radnor, the eastern boundary of his jurisdiction as the King's Chief Justice of South Wales, where Ranulph de Glanville transferred the Archbishop to his safe-keeping, and returned to England. The Archbishop delivered a Latin sermon, and the interpreter communicated its purport to the audience. This having been done, Giraldus immediately fell down at the feet of the Archbishop, and received from his hands the English crusading sign of the White Cross. This example was followed by the Bishop of St. David's, and the next proselyte was young Eineon, Lord of

<sup>1</sup> Giraldus, *Itinerary of Archbp. Baldwin*; *Annales Cambriae*, A.D. 1186; *Brut y Tywysogion*, A.D. 1188.

Elfael, son of Eineon Clyd, who was murdered on his way from Cardigan to Rhayader by the Normans.

Rhys himself was almost persuaded to take the Cross, but the wary old chieftain returned home to consider the matter; and, after consulting his wife Gwenllian, he resisted all further importunities, much to the annoyance of Giraldus, who held Gwenllian in great contempt because she had married Rhys, her fourth cousin.

A deputation of the canons of St. David's waited upon Rhys ap Gruffydd, and earnestly besought him to stop the Archbishop's progress through Wales, and more especially to forbid his extending his pilgrimage to St. David's, fearing that it would bring them into subjection to the see of Canterbury. One of the chief objects which the Archbishop had in making this pilgrimage was to assert his authority over the Welsh Church, which up to this time had claimed to be independent of the Church of England. Rhys declined to interfere, and the Archbishop proceeded on his way, visiting all the principal towns and monasteries in South Wales, and enlisting all sorts and conditions of men. As an illustration of the unsettled state of the country and the feuds that raged between the Norman settlers and the Welshmen at that time, Giraldus tells a story of their finding on the road to Whitland Abbey, the corpse of a young native who, when hastening to meet them, had been shot dead by twelve archers of the Castle of St. Clear's. The next day the Archbishop commanded that those archers should be marked with the sign of the White Cross as a punishment for their crime.

When the Archbishop arrived at St. David's he and his companions were hospitably entertained by Bishop Peter de Leia, who was then rebuilding his beautiful cathedral. The Archbishop the next day dined with Rhys ap Gruffydd at St. Dogmael's Priory, and on the following day he gave him a regal welcome at his Castle of Cardigan, his sons Maelgwn and Gruffydd being present.



From thence they journeyed through Kilgerran and Lampeter to Strata Florida Abbey, where Abbot Sisillus (Sitsyllt, or Cecil), who had succeeded David, the first Abbot, who died in 1185,<sup>1</sup> entertained the Archbishop and Rhys, with their numerous retinue. The Church of Strata Florida was not completed until 1201, but no doubt the presbytery, transepts, and monks' choir, and some parts of the nave, were then finished; and we can easily imagine the pride with which the all-powerful South Wales prince would show the Archbishop over the still unfinished Abbey, and which he, quoting the words of his charter, "had built, loved, and cherished, and increased its estates and possessions."

While journeying northwards the following morning, the Archbishop and his party were met by Cynrig, one of Rhys's sons, with a body of light-armed youths, and they stopped to confer with him. Giraldus has preserved for us a description of Cynrig. He says he was tall and handsome, fair, with curly hair, dignified in manner, and of most royal aspect, though simply clothed, according to the custom of his country, with a thin cloak and inner garment; his legs and feet, regardless of thorns and thistles, being bare.

The Archbishop endeavoured to induce the young princes, Gruffydd, Cynrig, and Maelgwn, to take the cross, but they declined. Maelgwn agreed to accompany the Archbishop on his progress through North Wales, and to follow him to the King's court, and then, if Henry did not object, to join the crusade. He, however, did not become a crusader, and soon returned to brew mischief at home, and to be a source of trouble to his father.

Rhys ap Gruffydd accompanied the Archbishop as far as the River Dovey, which was the boundary of his dominions and of the diocese of St. David's; and here Peter de Leia and Rhys bade farewell to the Arch-

<sup>1</sup> *Brut y Tywysogion*, Rolls ed., p. 233. *Myfyrion Archaeology*, vol. ii, p. 438, gives 1182 as the date of Abbot David's death.

bishop, who proceeded on his journey through North Wales, under the care of the sons of Owain Gwynedd.

The Archbishop, during his progress through Wales, collected about 3,000 men, well skilled in the use of arrows and lances. The Welshmen of all ranks at that time were trained to war, the men of North Wales being especially expert in the use of the lance. The men of Merionydd used that weapon of extraordinary length. The men of South Wales, who were deemed the most warlike and valiant of this warlike race, excelled in the use of the bow, made of the wood of the native elm, not suited to carry an arrow to any great distance, but to answer well to the hand and inflict severe wounds.

Giraldus tells the story of two archers of Gwent, who sent their shafts through an oaken portal four inches thick; and that a man-at-arms belonging to William de Breos was wounded by an arrow, which pierced his armour of double-plated iron mail, passed through his hip, and killed his horse; that another had his armour, of the same sort, penetrated by an arrow, which nailed him through the hip to the saddle, and, on wheeling his horse round, was transfixed by another arrow through the other hip to the saddle.

The nobles and gentlemen of Wales went forth to war well mounted on powerful war-horses,<sup>1</sup> and clothed in mail, like their English and Norman neighbours; but most of the people served as infantry, wearing high shoes of untanned leather, or walking barefoot.

In *A History of Caricature and Grotesque*, by Mr. Thomas Wright, F.S.A., p. 179, there is an illustration of a Welsh archer, and of a Welshman with his spear, with what looks like a sword in his left hand, which has been copied from a caricature drawing of the time

<sup>1</sup> Rhys ap Gruffydd sent 86 war-horses to King Henry II, as a gift for his Irish expedition, and the King selected 36 of them, saying "that it was not from want of them they were accepted, but to express his thanks to Rhys more than before". (*Brut y Tyrysogion*, Rolls ed., pp. 213-15.)

of Edward I, upon the margin of a vellum document in the Record Office, belonging to the Treasury of the Exchequer, and consists of two volumes of vellum, called Liber A and Liber B. The clerk who was employed in writing it seems to have amused himself by drawing in the margin figures of the inhabitants of the provinces of Edward's dominions to which the documents referred.



*A Welsh Archer*



*A Welshman with his Spear.*

The engravings have been reproduced from Mr. Wright's illustrations, and represent the Welsh archer armed with the short strong bow, and whose clothing consists apparently of a plain tunic and light mantle, and wearing only one shoe. Giraldus says nothing of wearing one shoe. He merely says that the Welshmen in general, when engaged in warfare, "either walked barefooted, or made use of high shoes, roughly made of untanned leather."

The second figure carries the spear, which he rests on the ground at an angle, as if to receive cavalry, while he brandishes his sword in his left hand.

Both figures present a singularly grotesque appear-

ance, and are evidently caricatures, or the work of an amateur draughtsman.

Maelgwn ap Rhys, instead of becoming a crusader, returned to Wales: and at that time there seems to have been a considerable influx of English and Flemings into Pembrokeshire, whom the Welsh chronicles speak of as "English vagabonds, skulking in woods and plundering the country".<sup>1</sup> These intruders were very unwelcome to the Welsh, and Maelgwn—who is described as "the Man who was the shield and strength of all the South, for his fame was most manifest, and he was comely and beloved of all. Though of middling size, he was fierce towards his enemies, amiable towards his friends, ready of gifts, victorious in war"<sup>2</sup>—organised an expedition against the intruders, drove them out of Pembrokeshire, and sacked and burned the town of Tenby, which had harboured them.

The next year (1189) Henry II died. From the time when Rhys had met Henry on his way to Ireland, in 1171, the King and Rhys had become firm friends, and whenever the latter went to court, the King would always receive him in person, surrounded by his nobles, and treated him with great distinction; but, when Richard the First succeeded his father, Rhys waited upon the new King at Oxford, but Richard, who probably felt incensed at Rhys's refusal to join in the crusade, refused to see him; and the South Wales Prince, deeming this an insult, returned home without speaking to the King.<sup>3</sup> He forthwith mustered his military forces, and won several castles in Pembrokeshire and Carmarthenshire belonging to the Norman settlers; but his hostile advance upon Carmarthen was checked by the presence of an English army sent to oppose him, commanded by Prince John, Earl of Mortaigne, the King's brother.

<sup>1</sup> *Brut y Tywysogion*, p. 141.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, Rolls ed., p. 235.

<sup>3</sup> See note (Yorke's *Royal Tribes of Wales*, p. 36), *ante*, p. 60.

A peace was privately made between them, upon which Prince John returned to England.<sup>1</sup>

During the absence of Richard Cœur de Lion in the East, and his imprisonment in Germany, Rhys pursued the war and subdued all South Wales. He strengthened the fortifications of Kidwelly Castle, and made it one of the strongest fortresses in Wales. He seized upon Llawhaden Castle, belonging to the Bishop of St. David's. The only places that held out were Carmarthen, Haverfordwest, Pembroke, Gwys (or Wiston), Manorbier, Lamphey, and Carew. With these exceptions, all West Wales, from Gower to St. David's, seems to have been recovered by the Welsh.<sup>2</sup>

While Rhys ap Gruffydd was successfully fighting his English and Norman foes, domestic troubles came upon him thick and fast, which must have embittered his old age. In 1189 his son Maelgwn was seized, by the advice of his elder brother Gruffydd, and confined as a lunatic. In 1190 his beautiful daughter Gwenllïan, who had inherited in an eminent degree the personal beauty which distinguished her royal race, and was described by the *Chronicle* as the "flower and ornament of all Wales",<sup>3</sup> died, and was buried at Strata Florida Abbey. She was the wife of Ednyfed Fychan, the able general and minister of Llewelyn ap Iorwerth the Great. Another son, Owain, died in 1191, and was also buried at the abbey which his father had founded, and which became the burying-place of his descendants.<sup>4</sup>

Maelgwn's lunacy appears to have taken the form of rebellious conduct against his father; probably he was confined for attempted rebellion, lunacy being assigned as a cloak to cover the action of his family in the matter. However this may have been, he suc-

<sup>1</sup> *Annales Cambrie*, p. 57.

<sup>2</sup> *History of Little England beyond Wales*, by E. Laws, p. 146.

<sup>3</sup> *Brut y Tywysogion*, Rolls ed., p. 237.

<sup>4</sup> Owain was an illegitimate son of the Lord Rhys, by Sybel, daughter of Ivahir of Caerwedros (*Her. Vis. Wal.*, vol. ii, p. 99).

ceeded in escaping from prison in 1192, and with a party of his friends seized upon the Castle of Ystrad Meurig, and rose in revolt against his father's authority.<sup>1</sup>

According to the *History of the Princes of South Wales*, by the Rev. the Hon. G. T. O. Bridgeman, Rhys liberated his son from captivity, and it says that he did so against the will of William de Breos, into whose custody he had been delivered by his brother Gruffydd, who had taken him from Dinevwr without his father's knowledge.<sup>2</sup> Rhys ap Gruffydd was now besieging the castle and town of Swansea, and had almost reduced the citizens by famine to surrender, when he was obliged to relinquish the enterprise on account of the squabbles between his sons Gruffydd and Maelgwn.

Another son, Anarawd, in 1193, seized upon his brothers Madog and Howel, and deprived them of their eyesight, with the intention of possessing himself of their territory.<sup>3</sup> Their brother Maelgwn ransomed them from their captor by giving up to him the Castle of Ystrad Meurig.

In 1194 Rhys ap Gruffydd rebuilt the Castle of Rhayader Gwy, which had been destroyed during some of the internecine feuds of that period. In the same year his sons Anarawd and Maelgwn laid wait for him, probably on his return from Rhayader, took him prisoner, and confined him in the Castle of Nevern in Pembrokeshire; Maelgwn taking possession of the ancestral home at Dinevwr.

The sons of Cadwallon ap Madoc of Maelienydd, taking advantage of the general state of turmoil and confusion in which South Wales at this time was thrown by the rebellion of the sons of Rhys ap Gruffydd, seized upon the Castle of Rhayader; but their possession of it was of short duration, for in

<sup>1</sup> *Brut y Tywysogion*, p. 141.

<sup>2</sup> *Annales Cambrie*, p. 58.

<sup>3</sup> *Brut y Tywysogion*, Rolls ed., p. 239.

1195 Roger de Mortimer, with a strong force, attacked and dispossessed them of Maelienydd.

Howel Sais<sup>1</sup> (or "the Saxon", so called because he had for some years resided at the Court of the King of England) by stratagem released his father from captivity, and his friends and retainers rallying around him, the old prince very soon ousted Maelgwn from Dinevwr. His troubles were, however, not at an end, for two of his other sons, Rhys and Meredydd, obtained by treachery possession of Dinevwr and Llandovery Castles during Rhys's absence in some other part of his territory. Their success was, however, very short-lived, for, according to Powell's *History of Wales*, their father "laid private wait for them, and by treason of their own men (which were afraid anie further to offend their lord and prince) they were taken" at Ystrad Meurig, and brought before their father, who placed them in confinement.

Rhys, being once more settled at Dinevwr, appears to have determined to regain all the territories which he had lost during these years of domestic quarrels and warfare. In 1196 he levied a large army, attacked Carmarthen, took the castle, and burned the town, carrying away considerable booty.

He then proceeded to recover from Roger Mortimer the territory he had wrested from the sons of Cadwal-lon ap Madoc in Maelienydd and Elfael; marched into Radnorshire, recovered his Castle of Rhayader Gwy, and took Colwyn Castle<sup>2</sup>; from thence he advanced

<sup>1</sup> Some authorities speak of this son as blind. This is the son to whom Rhys gave the Castle of St. Clear's and the surrounding district; he subsequently obtained possession of the Castle of Gwys (or Wiston). (*Brut y Tywysogion*, Rolls ed., p. 239.)

<sup>2</sup> Some of the authorities translate this as Clun Castle. The Rolls ed. of the *Brut y Tywysogion* correctly describes it as Colwyn. This Castle was situated in the parish of Llansaintffraid, in Elfael in Radnorshire, and some remains of it can still be traced. The site is now occupied by a large farmhouse and buildings called "The Forest of Colwyn", on the side of the Turnpike Road from Builth to Kington.

as far as New Radnor, took the castle, and burnt the town. Roger de Mortimer of Wigmore, and Hugh de Saye of Richard's Castle, marched to relieve Radnor. Rhys determined not to remain in the castle to await their assault, but fought a pitched battle in the open plain near the town, where he totally defeated his enemies, put them to flight, and pursued them until darkness set in.<sup>1</sup>

After this success he proceeded to Pain's Castle, in Elfael, and laid siege to it; and before the owner, William de Breos, could return from South Wales, where he had taken St. Clear's Castle from Howel Sais, Rhys had obtained possession of it. William de Breos and the South Wales prince came to terms, and Pain's Castle was restored to him; he giving his daughter Mahalt, or Maud, in marriage to Gruffydd, Rhys's eldest son. She survived her husband, and was buried at Strata Florida in 1209.<sup>2</sup>

We now come to the closing scenes of the life of Rhys ap Gruffydd. According to the *Annales de Winton*, Bishop Peter de Leia of St. David's visited Rhys at Dinevwr, with a view of remonstrating with him for disturbing the peace of Holy Church and of his master the King of England; but Rhys treated him with indifference, and the Bishop departed from the interview in high displeasure. After the Bishop had retired for the night to his chamber, the graceless sons of Rhys, instigated, it is said, by their father, pulled him out of bed and dragged him into a neighbouring wood. The Bishop had nothing on but his woollen undergarment and drawers,<sup>3</sup> and in this half-

<sup>1</sup> *Brut y Tywysogion*, Rolls ed., p. 243.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, Rolls ed., p. 267.

<sup>3</sup> "Staminia tantum femoralibusque indutum." The Rev. the Hon. G. T. O. Bridgeman, in a note on this, in his *History of the Princes of South Wales*, p. 67, says: "I have not elsewhere met with the word *staminia*; but it is presumptively a derivative of *stamen*, which in the Glossary of Latin words appended to the Record edition of *Chronicon Monasterii de Abingdon*, is rendered as 'a woollen undergarment, used by the monks instead of hair cloth'."



naked state they irreverently dragged him through the wood. This was a serious matter for an elderly man on a chilly April night, and the Bishop was no doubt much relieved when some of the retainers of William de Breos, who was then staying at Dinevwr, rescued him from the hands of his tormentors. Next day the Bishop departed, and having summoned his archdeacons and all the presbyters of his diocese, he solemnly excommunicated Rhys and his wicked sons, and laid all his territory under an interdict.<sup>1</sup>

Very shortly after this (on the 24th of April 1197<sup>2</sup>) Rhys ap Gruffydd died of the plague which was then raging throughout north-western Europe, with the sentence of excommunication still resting upon him. Gruffydd, his eldest son, attended by his brothers and friends, came to the Bishop and humbly implored his pardon for the offences they had committed, promising due submission and respect to the English King, as well as to the Bishop himself. The Bishop was obdurate, and the most they could obtain was a promise to refer the matter to the Archbishop of Canterbury. It took a long time to send such a message in those days, and until received the body of Rhys could not be buried. At length the answer was returned, that "If the children of Rhys had really awakened to the enormity of their offence, Holy Church was, as ever, ready to receive sinners back into her bosom, but penance must be exacted." Whereupon the Bishop consented to absolve the deceased prince and his living sons, on condition that not only the sons should be scourged, but also the now mouldering corpse of their father. There is some doubt as to where Prince Rhys was buried; some authorities say at St. David's Cathedral, where a monument in the second arch from the east, on the south side of the presbytery, is shown as his; other accounts say that he was buried at Strata Florida.

<sup>1</sup> *History of Little England beyond Wales*, by E. Laws, p. 146.

<sup>2</sup> *Annales Theokesberie*.

Owing to his quarrel with the Bishop, it would seem more probable that he would be laid to rest, after his long and eventful career, in the Abbey, where already were buried his son and daughter and his brother Cadell ; on the other hand, it is strange, if such were the case, that no record of this event should appear in the *Brut y Tywysogion*, the chronicles written by the monks of Strata Florida, in which they mention the principal events of his life. As they carefully registered therein the burial of other and less important personages in their Abbey, it seems strange that they should have omitted recording the burial of their founder, if he was interred there.

The recent excavations have thrown no light on this subject ; every tomb in the church has been rifled, the beautiful monuments utterly destroyed, and the only trace of an inscription discovered are the letters . . . IN . PA . . . on a fragment of a tombstone found in the south transept. In the chapter-house has been found a large tombstone with a cross upon the upper part, and three panels in the lower portion ; but on this there were no letters, nor appearance of any inscription. Possibly some sculptured stone may turn up when further excavations are undertaken, and we may yet be rewarded by finding some monumental slab or inscribed stone, which may clear up the doubts that exist as to the burial-place of the last of the princes of South Wales.

The Rev. the Hon. G. T. O. Bridgeman, in his *History of the Princes of South Wales*, has a most interesting note upon the subject of the monument to Rhys ap Gruffydd and his son Rhys Gryg, in St. David's Cathedral Church, as follows :

“ Much has been written on the subject of these monuments, but it yet remains to be decided to whom they really belong. Browne Willis, who is closely followed by Mr. Manby, ascribes the effigy on the south side to Res ap Tudor, Prince of South Wales ; and considers the other to represent Owen Tudor, the father of Edmund, Earl of Richmond. He subsequently cor-

rects the latter statement, and assigns the second monument to Res Grig, whom he erroneously calls the son of Res ap Tudor. Mr. Fenton reduces this tradition to its original form, and attributes the tomb to Res ap Griffith, commonly called the Lord Res, and his son Res Grig, respectively. Messrs. Jones and Freeman, the authors of the *History and Antiquities of St. David's*, from whom the above account is borrowed, affirm: 'It is certain that these, and these alone of the South Welsh Princes, were buried at St. David's, the rest of their family having been buried at Strata Florida Abbey.' In corroboration of which they give the following quotations: 'Anno MXXCVIII Ricardus Rex obiit. Resus filius Grifut Snt Walliæ Princeps Moritur iv. cal. Maii; ejus corpus apud Sanctum David honorifice humatum est' (*Annales Menevensis*; *Anglia Sacra*, ii, p. 649); and 'Y vllw-ydyn honno bu uarw Rys Gryc yn Llandeilaw Vawr, ac y cladwyt yn Mynyw yn ymyl bed y dat' (*Brut y Tywysogion*; *Myv. Arch.*, ii, p. 456). According to Warrington (*Hist. Wal.*, ii, p. 5), however, who quotes from a MS. of Edward Llwyd, in Sir John Sebright's collection, and Vaughan's *British Antiquity Revived*, the Lord Res was buried at Ystrad Flur in the Abbey of his own foundation. I am disposed to believe that he was buried at St. David's; but these monuments in St. David's Cathedral are of much too late a date, judging from the style of the armour, to have been erected at the time of Res ap Griffith's death in 1197, or that of his son Res Grig, who died in 1223. The armour is that of the latter part of the fourteenth century. The effigy on the south side (a figure of which is given in Hoare's *Giraldus*) represents a man rather advanced in years, in a recumbent attitude, clothed in armour with his vizor raised, booted and spurred: the head, which has the conical-shaped basinet and camaille, is reclining upon a casque surmounted by the crest,—on a chapeau, a lion sejant. The body-armour is covered by a jupon, on the breast and back of which are embroidered the wearer's arms [*gules*] within a bordure engrailed [*or*] a lion rampant [*of the second*]. It is not quite clear whether the jupon, which falls in a fringe round the hips, is meant to have sleeves, or whether the figure has a hauberk with short sleeves, those of the tunic appearing beneath them. The hands are clasped; there is a richly decorated belt and sword; the legs have complete plate-armour, with genouilleres; the feet have spurs, and rest on a lion. Above it is a screen and projecting canopy of late Perpendicular work. The figure on the north side of the altar is similar in nearly every respect, but evidently the representation of a much younger man. The head, however, reclines on a double cushion, and the heraldic

bearings on the jupon are different by a label of three points. The arms are protected by plate-armour, with elbow-joints and round plates at the elbows. The hands are broken off, but were originally clasped in prayer. Both these figures are extremely well sculptured in fine oolite; and it is evident that they both represent members of the same family. We can hardly conceive the position which these tombs occupy being conceded to any but to persons of high rank; and the arms are those of Res ap Tudor and his descendants. These arms were subsequently assumed by the Talbots, who married an heiress of the family; but there is no special ground for supposing that any members of this family were buried at St. David's. The authors of the *History and Antiquities of St. David's* are on the whole inclined to believe that these effigies mark the resting-place of the Lord Res and his son; their conclusion being based on 'the general tradition, the conspicuous position which they occupy, and the mark of cadency on one of the figures.' And in order to account for the discrepancy between the style of the armour and the date of their deaths, they conjecture that they might have been put up by one of the Talbot family, whose members possessed great power in South Wales, and were claiming greater, and seemed to have regarded themselves as in some sort the representatives of Res ap Griffith. If the principle once be conceded that such monuments may have been erected long after the death of those to whose memories they were put up, there can be no means of identifying them by the style of their architecture or the dress of the figures. If the Talbots had erected such monuments to their remote ancestors, they would also have been careful to note more clearly for whom the effigies were intended. There is, however, another way of accounting for these monuments which does not appear to have occurred to the learned antiquaries who have written on the subject. It seems to have escaped their notice that the senior branch of this princely family, the descendants of the Lord Griffith, eldest son of Res, and brother of Res Grig, were extant in the male line, and retaining a portion of their ancient inheritance so late, at least, as the year 1355, and probably later. And whereas they held, in addition to their portion of Cardigan, lands also in Rhôs and the lordship of St. David's, it is not improbable that they may have been buried at the cathedral church of that city. The label of three points on the armour of the younger figure seems to me rather to prove that it is not the effigy of Res Grig, who was a younger son, seeing that the label is, almost invariably, the mark of difference assumed by an elder son."

The *Brut y Tywysogion*,<sup>1</sup> translated by the late Aneurin Owen, known as the “Gwentian Chronicles of Caradoc of Llancarvan”, thus describes the character of Rhys ap Gruffydd: “Rhys, son of Gruffydd, died, the bravest, the wisest, the most generous, and the most illustrious of all the Princes, and his son Gruffydd took possession of the government in his room.” The Rolls edition, edited by the Rev. John Williams (*ab Ithel*), gives a much longer list of his virtues and achievements; and the chronicler, in addition, has given us a copy of the metrical verses in Latin which were composed when Rhys died, and he also gives a copy of the Latin verses, which, the chronicle states, “are in his praise on his tomb, and which were made after he had been buried”. (*See Appendix.*)

In Yorke’s *Royal Tribes of Wales*, p. 48, there is the following story, which throws a little light upon the domestic life of Rhys and upon his character.

“A spirit of enmity generally existed between the people, as well as the princes, of South and North Wales. When Dafydd ab Owain Gwynedd, Prince of the North, had honourably received some fugitives from the South, his courtiers insisted that it was too much condescension in him to favour the subjects of a rival prince, who would not show the least respect to any of his. Dafydd, upon hearing this swore a great oath, that he would not rest until he would be satisfied, whether the Lord Rhys of South Wales, would not honourably receive some messenger, sent by him to his Court. He was some time before he could meet with a person who would undertake the trial. At length Gwgan, of Caer Eneon in Powys land, set off on the embassy; and arriving at Lord Rhys’s Court found him in a furious temper, beating his servants and hanging his dogs. Gwgan knowing it was not a proper time to appear, delayed his message until the following day; and then in a long speech, still extant in MS., he let the noble descendant of Rhys ab Tewdwr Mawr know that he came from Dafydd ab Owain of North Wales, of the stock of royal Cynan, to pay his

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<sup>1</sup> In previous notes this is referred to as the *Brut y Tywysogion*. When the reference is to the translation by the Rev. John Williams, the words “Rolls ed.” are added.

friendly respects to him ; and if he was well received, he had commission from his Prince to thank the Lord Rhys ; if not, he had commission to act on the reverse. The Lord Rhys asked Gwgan in what could his honourable reception exist. Gwgan answered, In giving me a horse better than my own to carry me home ; in giving me five pounds in money, and a suit of clothes ; in giving my servant, who leads my horse by the bridle, a suit of clothes and one pound. Come in, said the Lord Rhys, I will give thee the noblest steed in my stud, for the sake of thy royal master ; and above thy demand, I will double the sums, and treble the suits of apparel. Which promise was performed, and Gwgan returned, to the mutual satisfaction of both princes."

We have one further illustration, from Giraldus Cambrensis, of Gruffydd in more courtly company, where evidently he was perfectly at home, and the Welsh Prince appeared to have been in every way the equal of the English barons, who, soon after his day, wrested from King John Magna Charta.

"It happened at this time (1188), while Rhys was attending the conference with the Archbishop and Ranulph de Glanville, at Hereford, that the Welsh Prince was one day sitting at dinner in the house of William de Vere, Bishop of Hereford, by the side of that prelate and Walter, son of Robert de Clare, both of whom were descended from the family of Clare. On this occasion, Giraldus de Barri, Archdeacon of Brecknock (who was nearly related to Rhys), approached the table, and standing before them, thus facetiously addressed himself to Prince Rhys : ' You may congratulate yourself, Rhys, on being now seated between two of the Clare family, whose inheritance you possess.' For at that time he held all Cardiganshire, which he had recovered from Roger de Clare, Earl of Hertford. Rhys, a man of excellent understanding and particularly ready at an answer, immediately replied : ' It is indeed true that for some time we were deprived of our inheritance by the Clares, but as it was our fate to be losers, we had at least the satisfaction of being dispossessed of it by noble and illustrious personages, not by the hands of an idle and obscure people.' The Bishop, desirous of returning the compliment to Prince Rhys, replied : ' And we also, since it has been decreed that we should lose the possession of those territories, are well pleased that so noble and upright a Prince as Rhys should be at this time lord over them.'"

(Hoare's *Giraldus*, p. 22 ; *History of the Princes of South Wales*, by the Rev. the Hon. G. T. O. Bridgeman, p. 60.)

Besides the Abbey of Strata Florida, Rhys also founded the Abbey of Talley in Carmarthenshire,<sup>1</sup> was a benefactor to the Commandery of the Knights Hospitallers, at Slebech,<sup>2</sup> and to Whitland Abbey.<sup>3</sup>

According to Yorke's *Royal Tribes of Wales*, Rhys ap Gruffydd married Gwenllian, daughter of Madoc ap Meredydd, Lord of Bromfield, by whom he had four sons and two daughters. These were Gruffydd, who succeeded him as Lord of South Wales, Cadwgan, Rhys Gryg (or "the Hoarse"), and Meredydd. Gruffydd, Rhys, and Meredydd are mentioned in his charter to Strata Florida. One of the daughters was Gwenllian, the wife of Ednyfed Vychan, from whom was descended King Henry VII, previously mentioned ; the other daughter, either Anne or Agnes, was the ancestress of the Wynnes of Gwydir.

In addition to his legitimate children by Gwenllian, he appears to have had a very large family by a perfect harem of concubines ; among these were Maelgwn, Morgan, Cynrig, Howel Sais, Lord of St. Clear ; Cadwalader, who was assassinated and buried at Whitland ; Meredydd, who was Archdeacon of Cardigan ; Meredydd Iddall (or "the Blind"), whose eyes were put out by Henry II ; Owen Caerwedros, Anarawd, Madoc, and Howel ; the two latter were probably the sons whose eyes were put out by their brother Anarawd.

Among his numerous daughters, we find one married William de Breos ; another, Sir William Martyn, Lord Marcher of Cemaes ; another, Eineon Clyd, Lord of Elfael, who was assassinated by the retainers of the Mortimers ; Eineon ap Rhys, Lord of Gwarthronion, married another ; Bledri, Lord of Dyfed ; Cadifor ap Dyfnwal, Lord of Castle Howel, and .

<sup>1</sup> Tanner's *Notitia Monastica*.

<sup>2</sup> Fenton's *Pembrokeshire*.

<sup>3</sup> *Rot. Chart.*, p. 206.

Gruffydd ap Ivor Bach of Glamorgan, were also his sons-in-law. The mothers of this numerous progeny were among the noblest of the land: and, though the state of morals at the courts of the Welsh princes was very lax at this period, we must recollect that concubinage was equally as prevalent at the court of Henry II, and among the English nobility of that time. The illegitimate children in Wales were received on an equal footing, and inherited equally with those born in wedlock. The Welsh law of gavelkind, whereby sovereignties and principalities, as well as private estates, were divisible among all the male issue, whether legitimate or not, tended to promote feuds, not only in families but among princes and rulers, by the incessant subdivision of property and power, and this was peculiarly exemplified in the family of Rhys ap Gruffydd. Though Gruffydd ap Rhys, his eldest legitimate son, succeeded to the dominion of the territories held by his father, yet his brother Maelgwn, assisted by Gwenwynwyn, Lord of Powys, attacked him by surprise in his castle of Aberystwith, and took him prisoner, and then proceeding against other of his fortresses, made himself master of the whole county of Cardigan; and though Gruffydd was soon released by the English lords into whose custody he had been delivered, and obtained possession of his territories, yet, through the restlessness and ambition of his brother Maelgwn, he was embroiled in difficulties till the time of his death in 1201.<sup>1</sup> By his wife Maud, daughter of William de Breos of Brecknock, he left two sons, Rhys and Owain, the former of whom succeeded him in his dominions. Young Rhys is stated to have taken the Castle of Llandovery in 1203, which, on his father's death, had fallen into the hands of his uncle Maelgwn. He afterwards took and fortified Llangadock Castle, and shortly after he gained possession of Dinevwr, the royal residence of his ancestors.

<sup>1</sup> *Brut y Tywysogion*, Rolls ed., p. 257.



Rhys Grug, brother of Maelgwn, who had hitherto been on friendly terms with his nephews, now turned his arms against them, and took from them the Castle of Llangadock; and such was the effect of these commotions, that in a few years these young lords were deprived of nearly the whole of their estates by their uncles; whereupon they appealed to King John of England, who ordered Fulk de Breauté, Viscount of Cardiff, Warden of the Marches, to assist them in regaining their estates.<sup>1</sup> An adjustment of these disputes was subsequently effected through the mediation of Llewelyn ap Iorwerth; who, owing to the abdication of his independence by the Lord Rhys ap Gruffydd, and the internecine warfare carried on by his descendants, had become the recognised head of all Wales, to whom, as suzerain, the contending parties agreed to refer the matters in dispute, and that he should adjudicate on the division of the inheritance left by Rhys ap Gruffydd, which had been the cause of so much bloodshed. Llewelyn ap Iorwerth summoned "all the wise men of Gwynedd" and "the most part of the Welsh princes" to a great council at Aberdovey (according to the *Brut y Tywysogion*, but at Cardigan, according to Powell's *History of Wales*, where no doubt a Court was duly constituted in accordance with the laws of Howel Dda), and there he made his award, allotting, as described in the *Brut y Tywysogion*, Rolls ed., pp. 289-90, to Maelgwn three cantrevs of Pembrokeshire, that is to say, "Cantrev Gwarthev, the cantrev of Cemaes, and the cantrev of Emlyn, with Penllwynog and the Castle of Cilgerran; and of the Vale of Tywi, the Castle of Llanymddyvri, with two comots, namely, Hirvryn and Mallaen, and the manor of Myddvai; and of Ceredigion, the two comots of Gwynionydd and Mabwynion. And to young Rhys, and his brother Owain, the sons of Gruffydd, son of Rhys, were allotted the Castle of

<sup>1</sup> *Archæologia Cambrensis*, vol. ix (1854), p. 294.

Aberteivi, and the Castle of Nant yr Ariant, with three cantrevs of Ceredigion. And to Rhys the Hoarse were allotted, as his share, the whole of Cantrev Mawr, except Mallaen, and the Cantrev Bychan, except Hervryn and Myddvai; and to him likewise came Cydweli and Carnwyllon." Rhys Gryg (or "the Hoarse") therefore, had the ancestral domain of Dinevwr, and Rhys ap Gruffydd's grandsons received the Castle of Cardigan, which their grandfather had rebuilt, and where he sometimes resided.

Having now brought down the history of the family of the founders of the monasteries of Ystrad Flûr and Strata Florida to the time when the last of the race of Rhys ap Tedwr, of the royal line of Cadell, who held princely rank, died; and having seen how, by the influence of the Welsh law of succession, his great estates and the extensive territories over which he ruled as chief lord became subdivided among his sons and grandsons, it would be taking us too far afield from the subject of Strata Florida Abbey to enter further into the history of his successors separately from the Abbey itself; therefore, in the succeeding chapters, it will only be in connection with the charters, the possessions, and the events more immediately connected with the monastery, that we shall have to deal with the descendants of Rhys ap Gruffydd.

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## CHAPTER IV.

### HISTORY OF THE ABBEY AND DESCRIPTION OF ITS POSSESSIONS.



Seal of the Abbot of Strata Florida.

THE first historical account of the monastery of Strata Florida is to be found in Leland's *Itinerary*, vol. v, p. 77<sup>1</sup>; he described the church as large, "side ilid and crosse ilid". There is a marginal note which says, "The Fundation of the Body of the Chirch was made to have bene 60 Foote lengger than it is now." It is difficult to understand what Leland meant by this, unless the monks had preserved some tradition of an intention to build the church longer when first founded, imitating the extremely long nave of Abbey Cwmhir.

He speaks of a large cloister, a fratriy, and infirmary, the two latter being in ruins when he visited Strata Florida. It would therefore seem that the Abbey never recovered the devastation committed in the wars of Owain Glendower. Leland appears to have ridden over the hills in the immediate vicinity of the Abbey, and taken notes of the lakes in the neighbourhood, and of some of the possessions of the monastery in that part of Cardiganshire. The account given in his *Itinerary* is very meagre, and but little is to be gleaned

<sup>1</sup> See Appendix.

from it that will throw any light upon what was the condition of the church and conventual buildings when Leland visited it.

Dugdale in his *Monasticon*, and Bishop Tanner in his *Notitia*, give us very little further information, except that the former supplies the text of the charters of Rhys ap Gruffydd and of Henry II, also an extract from the *Valor Ecclesiasticus*, temp. Hen. VIII, and other documents of that period, giving a list of the possessions of the Abbey and their value at the time of the dissolution of the monasteries.

Bishop Tanner, in his *Notitia Monastica*, gives further references to charters and public records, all of which will be found in the Appendix ; but does not, with the exception of mentioning the destruction of the Abbey by fire in the Welsh wars of Edward I, add anything more to what Leland and Dugdale had written.

Various topographical authors have, from time to time, described the Abbey with more or less accuracy, basing their facts upon Leland and Dugdale's writings, and upon what Sir Samuel Rush Meyrick, in his *History of Cardiganshire*, published in 1808 upon this subject. That eminent antiquary endeavours to fill in the blanks of another of Leland's marginal notes, which seems to refer to the older foundation of Ystrad Flur, and he says :

"The present structure was built, therefore, according to Dugdale, by the abbot, in the reign of Edward I, in the year 1294, and stands in a delightful situation ; but the structure raised by Rhys ap Grifyth stood about two miles from this, in a south-west direction, on a plain near the river Flûr, whence it took its name ; and where still remains an old building, now used as a barn, called hên monach log, or 'the old abbey'. Perhaps it might be a part of the original edifice which escaped the conflagration. This also seems to me to explain a mutilated marginal note, in folio 75 of Leland's *Itinerary*, which is, 'Stratfler of sum caullid, because . . . bytwixt it and Flere Brokes. of sum . . . it stode in the . . .', and which I think might thus be restored, 'Stratfler of sum called, because (of

*the plain*) bytwixt it and Flere Brokes, of sum (*because formerly*) it stode in the (*plain near Flere Brokes*).’ Something of this kind most probably Leland had heard from the monk of Stratfler, whom he mentions he had interrogated respecting the antiquities of Cardiganshire; and he might then have made it a note on the margin of his book.”

If Meyrick had said that the structure raised by “*Rhys ap Tewdwr*” stood about two miles from the abbey founded by *Rhys ap Gruffydd*, he would have surmounted the difficulty which has arisen as to who was the original founder of Strata Florida. Subsequent writers have been misled in the same way; and Meyrick also is entirely in error in supposing, that after the destruction of the Abbey by fire in the reign of Edward I, the Abbot built the present structure on a new site. After the fire the Abbey was restored, not rebuilt entirely; the conflagration destroyed the roofs and internal timber fittings of the choir, the screens of the transepts and chapels, and much of the carved work was damaged, but the walls, arches, piers, and ornamental stonework were left practically intact.

The following is a continuation of Meyrick’s account of the Abbey :

“The present structure was once the chief depôt of whatever was civilized. It had its hospitia and its cells established in various places. I have already mentioned that it divided with the abbey at Conway the pious and honourable charge of depositing and carrying on the records of the principality. Several copies of the chronicles written by Caradoc of Llan-carvan were preserved here, and the successions of the princes recorded from the year 1156 till 1270, the moment of Llewelyn ap Gruffyth’s unhappy fall. At that period these reverend persons quitted that sequestered abode, and were the bearers of their Prince’s remonstrance to the English throne; and interceded with the Archbishops of Canterbury and York for their good offices in relieving him from the insults and oppressions of the Lords Marchers. Llewelyn ap Iorwerth, in the year 1237, invited all the lords and barons of Wales to Ystrad Flûr, and required from them the oaths of fidelity and allegiance to his son David. Those who now visit the spot will scarcely credit, at first sight, that the whole country round could furnish accommodation for such a company, or that this could be the theatre

of such ceremonies as are solemnized with us under the awful roof of Westminster. But when they call to mind the influence of superstition, and the immense territorial possessions of the abbey, they will have no cause to wonder. Llewelyn ap Iorwerth was not buried here, but at Conway. During the period from the dissolution to the present time, this once proud edifice has been rapidly decaying; all that now remains is the western entrance of the church, a very fine specimen of the Saxon arch, and a Gothic window of the south aisle. A lofty pile, which once formed the western angle of the north transept, seems as if it had not long to survive its kindred pile. Some of the outhouses still remain. About ten years ago a very fine silver seal was found in part of the land once occupied by the Abbey, by a boy who was ploughing. It was about the size of a crown piece, and circular. The boy sold it to an itinerant Jew for a few shillings. On it was engraved the arms of the Abbey. About three years ago another seal was found, belonging to an abbot of Ystradflur, and on it was the Virgin and Child. Its shape was the Gothic ellipse, and it was made of silver.<sup>1</sup>

“The celebrated bard of this county, Davydd ab Gwilym, was buried here, and an epitaph placed on his tomb, the production of some bard who deeply felt the loss of this great genius. It is as follows :

“‘Dafydd, gwiw awenydd gwrdd,  
Ai yma’th roed dan goed gwyrdd?  
Dan lasbren hoyw ywen hardd,  
Lle’i claddwyd, y cuddiwydd cerdd!  
Glas dew ywen, glân Eos-Deifi  
Mac Dafydd yn Agos!  
Yn y pridd mae’r gerdd ddiddos,  
Diddawn in’ bob dydd a nos.’

“King Edward I granted the sum of seventy-eight pounds sterling to the Convent of Stratflur, for the damages suffered in the late war and conflagration. (For the original grant of Rhys, Prince of South Wales, *see* Appendix.)

“Owain Gwynedd, a bard of the 16th century, passing by the remains of this venerable edifice, could not help lamenting the loss of its former splendour. He says :

“‘Mae dialedd ryfedd am ryfig-buchedd,  
Beehod gwyr eglwysig;  
Mawr yw cur y mur cerrig  
Am watwor Duw—matter dig.’

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<sup>1</sup> This seal is now in the British Museum, and is illustrated on p. 87.

“In the *Gentleman's Magazine* for the year 1752 are the engravings of two coins dug up at this Abbey, and then in the possession of James Philips, Esq., of Blaenpant. One was a Flemish coin, brought over, as supposed, in the time of Queen Elizabeth; the other, a Venetian piece of Aloysius Mocenicus, who was Doge of that Republic A.D. 1560.

“The architecture of the Abbey was the circular arch, as appears by the western door; a print of the abbey, by Buck, shewing the window of the north transept before it fell, and from several freestones curved, frequently dug up in the ruins, once formed arches. This peculiar kind of architecture seems to sanction what Theophilus Jones has asserted in his history of Brecknock, viz., that ‘Bleddin ap Maenarch, who died about the end of the 11th century, was buried at Ystrad Flâr Abbey, which was built by his brother-in-law, Rhys ap Tewdor, and endowed in 1164 by Rhys ap Griffith, who styles himself founder, in his charter preserved in the *Monasticon*.’ Leland, in his *Collectanea*, vol. i, p. 45, more correctly calls ‘Resus filius Theodori, princeps Suth-Wallie, primus fundator of this monastery.’ It is probable all the freestones and ornaments were brought from the original edifice.

“The walls had glazed tiles affixed to them in the style of the paintings we meet with in old missals, marked with quatrefoils; and these are frequently dug up, as are the tiles of the pavement, which consisted of intersecting circles, etc. Painted glass has also been found; indeed, it seems that no expense was spared to render this a most magnificent building. Freestones are dug up which were ornamental, having circles touching each other carved on them. Guttain Owain, a herald, bard, and historian, resided chiefly at Ystradflâr monastery, and flourished about 1480. Philip Brydydd, who lived in the year 1250, was a Cardiganshire bard, but where he resided is not known. Sisillus was abbot of Ystradflâr in the time of Giraldus Cambrensis, and Giraldus informs us that he deposited his library of books at this Abbey in the reign of King John, previous to his quitting the country for Rome, in order to establish his claim to the bishopric of St. David's. This abbey was honoured as a place of interment for many of the Welsh princes. Among others were the following:—

“In the year 1176 died Cadell, the son of Gruffydd ap Rhys, and brother to Prince Rhys, after a long illness, and was honourably buried at Ystradflâr.

“In the year 1184 died Howel ap Yevan, Lord of Arustly, and was buried at Ystradflâr.

“In the year 1190 Owen ap Rhys died, and was buried here.

“ In the year 1196 died Prince Rhys ab Gruffydd, and was buried here.

“ In the year 1202, and on St. James’s Day, died Gruffydd, another son of Prince Rhys, who followed his father’s steps, and succeeded him in martial powers, as well as in government, and was buried here with great solemnity.

“ In 1204 Hywell ap Rhys was buried by the side of his brother Gruffydd, at Ystradflûr. This Hywel, being blind, was slain through the machinations of another brother.

“ In 1209 died Maltt, or Maude de Bruce, the wife of Gruffydd ab Rhys, and was interred by her husband in a monk’s cowl.

“ In 1210 died Isabel, daughter of Richard Clare, Earl of Hereford, and wife to William Gam, Lord of Gower, and was buried at this abbey.

“ In 1221 Young Rhys, son of Gruffydd ab Rhys, died, and was buried at Ystradflûr.

“ In 1230 Maelgwn, son of Prince Rhys, died, and was buried at Ystradflûr.

“ In 1235 Owen, son of Gruffydd ab Rhys, died, and was buried by his brother Rhys at Stratflûr.

“ I cannot help inserting here an elegant address to the Almighty, written by the elder Llewelyn of Meurig :

“ ‘ Llewelyn Fychan, ap Ll’n, Abad Ystradflûr.

“ ‘ Llywelyn gochap Meurig hên ai cant.

“ ‘ O. L. E. D.

“ ‘ Credaf ytt Jesu fab y croyw dad  
 Creawer hael llywiauwr haul a lleuad  
 Credalun nef gun naf ae ynad  
 Crair oddilys Fair ddeules fwriad  
 Canwaith ragoriaith pob rhyw gariad  
 Cannorthwyaist figeli gwliad  
 A’r awr hon etton Duw rewattad  
 Rhedon o’r diwedd ith wlëdd ath wlad  
 Y nerthaist fyfy megis neirthiad  
 Am arglwydd-lywym a mur gwleddwlad  
 Am wr eresdrefu a’m vawr Ystrad  
 Fflur ai phennadus a’i modir mad  
 Llywelyn wiwbarch llniaidd Abad  
 Fycha ngwr difau garwy dyfiad  
 Llin llyw cynnefin llew cynnifiad  
 Llewelyn arall dewyddgall dad  
 Heiliaist ddofydd gwynn hwyl bryn a brad  
 Haint a’i arwyddion hynt da roddiad  
 Anobaith fuam am iawn Abad  
 A’th nerth a’n diffyrth a’th wyrth wyrthiad



Clywed a wnaethost dost destuniad  
 Fy llef hyd y nef ehud nofiad  
 Ac estyn hoedl heb gus dyniad  
 Ym llayaidd obaith llaw-rodd Abad.'

"The following is a translation of the same:—

"Due to Thee is my confidence, Jesus, Son of the Father of Purity, the Creator, and bountiful Lord of the celestial luminaries, faithful Ruler of the universe, sacred relict of the kind-intentioned Virgin; a hundred proofs hast Thou favoured me with of Thy inexhaustible love; on a hundred occasions hast Thou hastened to my relief, Lord of the region of liberality; and now also, merciful Deity, have we fled to Thee for succour (may we finally be admitted to Thy blissful feasts and to Thy eternal regions), and now also hast Thou succoured me, as by a miraculous display of Thy power, when I fled to Thee for protection in behalf of my Lord and guide, the bulwark of the land of hospitality, in behalf of the preserver of order, the morning star of Strata Florida, its chieftain, its modeller, its virtuous director, its mild abbot, the praiseworthy Llewelyn Vaughan; superiorly happy in the gentleness of his temper and the vigour of his mind; happy in the loftiness of his stature and his high descent; the noble offspring of another generous Llewelyn, the lion-like protector of an enraptured country. God of Purity, whose influence sheds the dew of health on every region, and affords protection against every malignity, Thou hast dispelled the gloom of contagion, and banished all its inauspicious symptoms; Thou hast beamed the rays of goodness on us, and the splendours of health. At the apparent approach of the death of a righteous and virtuous abbot, we were overshadowed with the clouds of despair, but Thy merciful interposition, Thy miraculous power, effectually enlightened, consoled, and succoured us. On surges of air the cry of my distress had rapidly floated to the heavens, and reached Thy pitying ear; Thou heardest my heart-born complaints, and without pains, and without sorrow, Thou hast benignantly revived our hopes, and lengthened the genial days of the peerless abbot, whose glory is the charitable exploits of the hand of Liberality.'

"This was written by the elder Llewelyn, of Meurig, sur-named the Red, to the abbot of Strata Florida (Llewelyn Vaughan), on his recovery from a dangerous fit of illness.

"Llewelyngôch ab Mernig hên, of Nannau, in Merionethshire, flourished from 1330 to 1370.

"The names of three abbots are handed down to us. Sisillus (probably Sitsyllt, or Cecil) held that situation in the time of

Giraldus Cambrensis, viz., about the year 1188; Llewelyn Vychan, or Vaughan, about the year 1340; and Richard Tally, who was the last abbot, in the year 1553, enjoyed a pension of £40 a year. The present mansion was erected by John Stedman, Esq., son of John Stedman, of Staffordshire, Esq., from the ruins of the out-buildings belonging to the abbey.

“The pedigree of this family is as follows:—

“Galearbus, Duke of Arabia, was, through the tyranny of the king of that country, banished thence, and coming with his son Stedman, and his daughter Clarissa, toward the Holy Land, died ere he arrived there. But his son came to Jerusalem, and being a gallant person, was, by King Richard I of England, very much esteemed. He was made Knight of the Sepulchre, and had for arms a cross fleury *vert* in a field *or*. He came over to England A.D. 1191, and had given him in marriage by the said King, Joan, daughter and heir to Sir John Tatsal, or Tatshall, Knt., brother to Lord Robert Tatshall.

John Stedman of Kent. = Anne, daughter and heir to James Foster of Berkshire, Esq.

John Stedman of Berk- = ..., daughter to James Giotwyn, or Chetwyn, shire. Esq.

William Stedman . . = Francis, daughter and heiress to John Marshall of Yorkshire.

Thomas Stedman, Esq. = Eleanor, daughter to Wm. Willie, Esq.

John Stedman of Stafford- = Margaret, daughter to Sir Wm. Stafford, Knt. shire. Esq.

Humphrey Stedman . = Catherine, daughter and co-heir to Wm. Hill of Hill, in Shropshire.

John Stedman of Stafford- = Joan, daughter to John Lewis of Staffordshire. shire, Esq., 2nd son.

John Stedman of Ystrad- = Ann, natural daughter to Wm. Philips of Pontre flûr. Park.

John Stedman, Esq., eld- = Margaret, daughter and co-heir to David Lloyd est son. ab John.

James Stedman, Esq. . = Catherine, daughter to Sir Richard Pryse of Gogerthan, Knt.

John Stedman, Esq. . = Jane, daughter to Edward Vaughan of Traws-coed.

<i>a</i>	James Stedman, 1693	= Margaret, daughter to Richard Owens of Rhiwsaeson, Montgomery.
	Richard Stedman .	= Joan, daughter to Rowland Gwynn of Glanbrane, Esq., in co. Carmarthen.
	Richard Stedman .	= Anne, second daughter to Wm. Powell of Nanteos.

“This Richard Stedman left no issue, but bequeathed his estate to his wife’s brother and her heirs, and it is now in the possession of Captain Powell of Nanteos.”

In the third volume of the *Archæologia Cambrensis* will be found a paper on “The History and Architecture of Strata Florida Abbey”, by the Rev. G. Roberts, Vicar of Monmouth, which was read at the first annual meeting of the Cambrian Archæological Association, in September 1847. This interesting account adds somewhat to the history of the Monastery as given by Meyrick, and narrates the result of the excavations made at that time under the auspices of the Association. In the same volume was published a translation of the Inspeximus Charter of King Henry VI, embodying the successive grants of the Welsh princes for the endowment of the Abbey.

In vol. xi, Fourth Series, of the *Archæologia Cambrensis*, there is a very exhaustive account of “the Grange of Cwmtoyddwr”, by Mr. R. W. Banks of Ridgebourne, Kingston; this was one of the many granges belonging to the Monastery, situated between the rivers Wye and Elan, forming part of Cantref Maelienydd in Radnorshire. In treating, hereafter, upon the possessions of the Abbey, I shall have occasion to refer to this account of the Grange of Cwmtoyddwr, and in the Appendix will be found original documents copied therefrom.

The earliest records of Strata Florida Abbey are to be found in the *Brut y Tywysogion*, or “Chronicle of the Princes of Wales”. Of this chronicle two editions have been published; one, edited by the Rev. John Williams (*ab Ithel*), Rector of Llanymowddwy, was

published under the auspices of the Record Commission in 1860, and has been referred to in previous chapters as the “Rolls edition”; the other was published by the Cambrian Archæological Association in 1863, with a translation by the late Aneurin Owen, Esq., and is known as “The Gwentian Chronicle of Caradoc of Llancarvan”; this chronicle ends A.D. 1196, with an entry of the death of Rhys ap Gruffydd. The Rolls edition, which was transcribed from a MS. in Jesus College, Oxford, known as the *Red Book of Hergest*, is believed to have come from Strata Florida Abbey. The *Red Book of Hergest* is a large folio, magnificently bound in morocco, of red colour; the name refers to the place where it was originally found, in South Wales; it is supposed to have been written at different times between the years 1318 and 1454, and it contains a variety of subjects—chronicles, romances, popular tales, historic triads, treatises on grammar, versification, and physic, as well as poems from the sixth century to the fifteenth, all of them being in the Welsh language.

This translation of the *Brut y Tyrysogion* has been collated with other manuscripts, two of which are at Hengwrt, the other, the Cottonian manuscript, Cleopatra B. v, and also with the book of Basingwerk, belonging to Thos. T. Griffiths, Esq., of Wrexham. The last-named manuscript was written by the celebrated bard, herald, and poet, Guttyn Owain, and is styled in some catalogues “The Book of Basing”, on account of it having been in the library of Basingwerk Abbey.<sup>1</sup>

In the Introduction to the edition of the “Gwentian Chronicle”, published by the Cambrian Archæological Association, the reasons given for believing this chronicle to have emanated from the Abbey of Strata Florida, rather than from Conwy Abbey, are: the prominent manner in which the foundation of that Abbey is introduced to the reader:—“1164. By the

<sup>1</sup> *Brut y Tyrysogion*, Rolls ed., Preface, p. xlvi.

permission of God, and the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, a convent of monks first *came* to Strata Florida"; and the brief way in which we are informed that the establishment of Conwy emanated from Strata Florida:—"1186. A society from Strata Florida *went* to the Rhedynawc Velen in Gwynedd." In the margin of the MS. this place is stated to be "Maenan", to which the monks of Aberconwy were removed by Edward I. The expressions *came* and *went* are here very striking. The number of local events narrated interesting to the residents, among which we may class the burials of twenty-two distinguished personages, including four abbots of the place; the number of similar occurrences stated to have taken place at Conwy amount only to five. The mention of six abbots by name, one of whom, Gruffydd, made his peace with King Henry, and compounded for his dues. We find no mention of an abbot of Conwy but once, when the body of Prince Gruffydd was delivered to the Abbots of Strata Florida and Conwy, in London, and conveyed by them to Aberconwy for burial. We read: "1201. The community of Strata Florida went to their new church, a fabric of elegant workmanship, on Whitsun Eve." 1238, mention is made of the fealty sworn, by the chieftains of Wales, to David, son of Llywelyn, at Strata Florida. 1254, we have the price of the great bell at Strata Florida; 1284, the burning of the monastery. Many other entries might be adduced to exemplify the great interest taken in registering incidents which occurred at Strata Florida; examples of which are rare in regard to Conwy.

The late Aneurin Owen expressed an opinion that he concluded it to be the Chronicle kept by the monks of Strata Florida successively, as it does not appear to be the work of one individual. For instance, one South Wales prince is stigmatized in the most opprobrious terms, and at considerable length; and the succeeding writer, in the most abrupt manner, eulo-

gises him, and concludes by commemorating his burial at Strata Florida.

In addition to the *Brut y Tywysogion*, we have the *Annales Cambriae*, which was also published by the Record Commission in 1860, edited by the Rev. John Williams (*ab Ithel*); this MS. the learned editor describes "as being, perhaps, the oldest chronicle of Welsh affairs we possess". He further remarks, in the Preface, p. xxvi, "The latter portion was probably composed at the monastery of Strata Florida, to which it frequently refers; the very last entry, indeed, being a notice of a conflagration which occurred there."<sup>1</sup>

"From the evident partiality displayed by the writers for the Cambrian interest, there can be little doubt that they were Welshmen, probably ecclesiastics, inmates of some of the religious houses that had sprung up in different parts of the country, and more especially of Strata Florida."

It is from these chronicles, aided by charters and other original documents in the MS. Department of the British Museum and the Record Office, that the history of the Abbey has been deduced. The materials are meagre in the extreme, but it is believed that further documentary evidence may eventually be forthcoming when the mass of MSS. yet existing in the Record Office, not yet examined, are classified and catalogued.

There must also be in the Vatican Library at Rome a very large number of documents relating to English and Welsh monasteries, which would throw much light upon the history of the abbeys of England and Wales; but, according to what we can learn as to this vast collection, it is so little arranged that it is impossible, even if it were practicable, to utilise the stores of historic materials that are in that great library.

<sup>1</sup> "A.D. 1286. Annus MCCLXXXVI. Combustio domorum apud Stratam Floridam." (*Annales Cambriae*, p. 109.)

It has been already mentioned that it was in 1164, according to the *Brut y Tywysogion*, that a "convent of monks" came first to Strata Florida; but we have no record from whence they came, whether direct from the parent monastery at Cîteaux, or from some Welsh Cistercian house; we only know that they were Cistercians, and, with the exception of the doubtful statement of Camden as to Cluniacs having been the order which probably occupied the earlier monastery of Ystrad Flûr, we know nothing of their predecessors at the older abbey founded by Rhys ap Tewdwr.

The Rev. Canon Bevan, in his *History of the Diocese of St. David's*, thus speaks of Welsh monasticism (chap. v, p. 80):

"The monasticism introduced into Wales by the Normans was of a very different type from that of the old British Church. The latter was rude, laborious, self-supporting, uniform in its rule, and simple in its aims; that of the Latin Church of the twelfth century was cultivated, wealthy, varied in its forms, and ambitious of influence both in Church and State. Little wonder, then, that British monasticism at once gave place to its more vigorous and versatile rival. Even the Welsh people seem to have become early inoculated with its spirit, and vied with the Norman conquerors in zeal and liberality for its support. Strata Florida, Cwmhir, and Talley were all founded by Welshmen, and at an early period in the movement. The effects of monasticism in Wales, as elsewhere, were of a mixed character. On the one hand, there can be no question that it was well adapted to the conditions, economical, social, and political, of the country at the period of its introduction. The monks were the pioneers of civilisation in the remoter parts of the country. The Cistercians, who were on the whole the most powerful order in South Wales, made it their rule to select the wildest regions for their operations, and they found full scope for their energies in such spots as Strata Florida and Cwmhir. They farmed largely and skilfully; in Pope Nicholas's *Taxatio*, made at a time when agriculture was severely depressed by the unsettled state of the country, Whitland is returned as possessing 1,100 sheep, 88 cows, and 15 mares; and Cwmhir 128 cows, 300 sheep, and 26 mares. They marked out mountain-tracks, erected bridges over unfordable streams, and provided refuges for travellers in the inhospitable districts they selected. The

well-known Devil's Bridge, in the neighbourhood of Aberystwith, was, in all probability, originally erected by the monks of Strata Florida.

"Hospitality was a general duty of all monastic bodies, and it was exercised, not only at the monasteries themselves, but also at the subordinate establishments erected on outlying estates, and known by the various forms which the Latin words *hospitium* and *hospitale* have assumed—*yspyttty* [Yspyttty Ystwith, belonging to Strata Florida]; *spyddid* (as in Llanspyddid); *spital*, and *spite* (as in Tavern-spite). The exercise of this duty was frequently very burdensome to the monasteries; the preceptor of Slebech complains (in a report sent in to his superiors in 1338) of the troops of Welshmen who visited the preceptory; and perhaps this may account for the large amount of beer which was consumed on the premises, as stated in the report. In the absence of monasteries, travelling would have been well-nigh impossible in those days; and another result of their existence was that news of passing events was diffused through the remoter parts of the country by the travellers (many of them pilgrims) who met in the guest-houses of the monasteries, as well as by the communications kept up among the houses of the same order. The monastery thus supplied, as far as the circumstances of the age permitted, the place of an inn, a club, and a newspaper. We may add that it was also a place for the safe custody of deeds and literary works; it was on this ground that Giraldus deposited his writings at Strata Florida before he started for Rome. The libraries of the Welsh monasteries were, no doubt, fairly well-stored with standard works in divinity and history, and the multiplication of copies of such books formed a regular department of the monastic profession. To the monasteries, moreover, we owe, not only the preservation, but the construction, of annals and other historical documents bearing on local history. In this department the monks of Strata Florida appear to have been specially active."

Whether the original colony of Cistercian monks that settled at Strata Florida were foreigners or Welshmen, they very soon became an entirely Welsh community, for in 1178<sup>1</sup> we read in the records, of the death of Cadell, Rhys ap Gruffydd's brother, who some time before had become a monk at this abbey; David, the first abbot, died seven years afterwards,<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Brut y Tywysogion*, p. 139.

<sup>2</sup> "1185. In that year David, Abbot of Strata Florida, died; and



and was succeeded by an abbot with a Welsh name—Sitsyllt; and whether the first abbot was a Welshman or not, his name seems to point to a Cymric origin, and certainly all the succeeding abbots appear to have been Welshmen, so far as we can gather from the scanty records left of them. (See list of abbots in Appendix.) The monks who witness the charters of Rhys ap Gruffydd's sons and grandsons have nearly all Welsh names, and we may therefore reasonably conclude that Strata Florida was essentially a monastery of Welsh Cistercians.

The Cistercian order arose in the west of France at the close of the eleventh century, and was instituted by three Benedictine monks of the Abbey of Molesme in Burgundy, who grieving over the general laxity and want of discipline that prevailed in the monasteries of their order, and more especially in the one to which they were attached, quitted their convent and founded, under the protection of Otho Duke of Burgundy, in the year 1098, the Convent of Cîteaux or Cistercium, where they established the new order under a much stricter rule of discipline, but founded upon the basis of the original statutes of the Order of St. Benedict. The rules of the new order were intended to bring it back to the strict letter of the old regulations of St. Benedict; simplicity of life and religion was its aim, and it has well been called the Puritan reform of the eleventh century.

Mr. Edmund Sharpe, in his work upon *The Architecture of the Cistercians*, states that "the most authentic records which remain to us of the acts of the Cistercians, and of the early history of the order, are contained in two chronicles, the first and earliest of which is known as the 'Magnum Exordium Cisterciense', the date of the compilation of which seems uncertain, and the 'Parvum Exordium', which was

Howel, son of Ienav, son of Owain Lord of Arwystli, died, and was honourably buried at Strata Florida." (*Brut y Tywysogion*, Rolls ed., p. 233.)

written A.D. 1120, by one of the elders of the Abbey of Clervaux. According to these histories, the first statutes of the order were composed by Alberic, the second abbot of Cîteaux, and published by him in 1101, the year after the new order had been confirmed by Pope Paschal. These related principally to the diurnal duties of the monks, their dress, diet, and mode of life. They were subsequently enlarged by Stephen, the third abbot, who added particular instructions in regard to the utensils and furniture of the church. The most important, however, of all the statutes of the order was the famous 'Charta Caritatis', the bond of brotherhood which united the whole of the existing and future abbeys of the order under a code of laws well designed to insure unanimity and conformity throughout the whole of the Cistercian community. This 'Charta Caritatis' was composed and edited by Abbot Stephen, at the request of his brother abbots, and was confirmed and published A.D. 1119, at a general chapter of the order, which was attended by the abbots of all the then existing Cistercian monasteries."

In a paper on "Roche Abbey and the Cistercian Order", read before the Yorkshire Architectural Society by Dr. F. R. Fairbank, F.S.A., published in the *Reports and Papers* of the Associated Architectural Societies of Lincoln, York, etc., vol. xviii, part I, pp. 36-38, the author thus refers to the rules of the Cistercian order :

"In dress, all habits not mentioned in the 55th chapter of the rule were to be discarded. The dress might vary according to climate, but S. Benedict had considered a cowl, tunic, and scapular, with shoes, socks, and stockings, sufficient, and these only in future were to be the dress. Garments of furs, or with ample folds, were not to be worn; nor were shirts, or hoods separated from the rest of the habit. The colour of the greater part of the dress, which with the Benedictines had been dark, was in the new order to be white, in honour of the blessed Virgin, in whose honour the new order was founded.

"The ordinary dress was to consist of a white tunic with a black scapular; and in the church and the house was to be

worn a white cowl, or cloak with a hood, which covered nearly the whole person. For out of doors they had also a black cloak.

“The diet was also brought back to primitive simplicity.

“In the matter of possessions, they had all things in common. They might hold what was necessary, such as lands, monasteries, offices, farm buildings, workshops, and live stock; but neither church lands nor tithes, nor large domains, except such as they could cultivate with their own hands. The Benedictines had spent their time in ‘the work of God’, as prayer and the study of religious writings was called, and also in teaching the young, and in manual labour. But with the Cistercians, labour—out-door labour—was to be a distinctive feature. They were to cultivate their lands themselves, and gain their food by the sweat of their brow, hence they acquired the name of farmer-like Cistercians. The monks proper—the professed monks—were helped in this by a subordinate class called *Conversi*, or lay-brethren. There had been lay-brethren among the Benedictines, but with the Cistercians they acquired a better recognised position.

“The lay-brethren or *Conversi* were quite distinct and separate from the professed monks, and were precluded from admission into their body. They were to pass through a year’s noviciate, and such only were received as *Conversi* who could give the equivalent of a hired labourer’s work. They were not allowed to possess a book, nor to acquire any learning save the ‘*Pater Noster*’ and other prayers, which were taught *viva voce*. This had also been so with the *Conversi* of the Benedictines; for we find in the obituary of Durham—a Benedictine House—many entries of the services to be sung for departed brethren of the order, such as the following:—‘Seven full offices shall be sung in the convent; each priest shall sing for him one mass, and the other brothers shall sing for him one psalm; but the laity, who do not know the psalter, shall each sing 150 *Pater Nosters*.’

“They were to make profession after their year’s noviciate in a prescribed form. The ceremony took place in the monks’ chapter, and consisted in their kneeling before the abbot, placing their hands within his, and promising obedience to him till their death. When once they had made profession as converts, they were for ever inadmissible to the order as monks; nor if they left the monastery and became monks in any other order could they ever be received again into that of the Cistercians. They occupied a portion of the monastery set apart for them, and had also a place allotted for them in the

church. They were superintended by a special master—the Magister Conversorum—who was a professed monk. Their duties consisted in field labour, to which they went at sunrise in summer, and after nocturns in the winter, the same as the professed monks. Their dress was similar to that of the monks, but brown instead of white. Another prominent characteristic of the new order was the filial dependence of the various houses on those from which they had sprung. With the Benedictines there had been no dependence. Each house had a separate existence, and was not responsible to any common head, but to the bishop of the diocese. Referring to this organisation in the new order, Cardinal Newman, in his *Life of Stephen Harding*, written when he was a clergyman of the Church of England, says:—‘Stephen Harding might, as Abbot of Cîteaux, have constituted himself the head of this increasing congregation, but his object was not to lord it over God’s heritage, but to establish between the Cistercian abbeys a lasting bond of love. And, therefore, he determined on instituting a system of reciprocal visitation. He presented to his brethren in the general chapter of 1119 a body of statutes which he called “Carta Caritatis”. In its provisions the whole order is looked upon as one family, united by ties of blood. Cîteaux is the common ancestor. The Abbot of Cîteaux was called “Pater universalis ordinis”; he visited any monastery he pleased, and whenever he went the abbot gave up his place to him. And on the other hand, the abbots of the first four abbeys sprung from it visited Cîteaux. Besides which, each abbot went every year to inspect the abbeys which had sprung from his own house. Every year also a general chapter was held at Cîteaux, which all the abbots of the order, except some whose houses were in very distant countries, were obliged to attend under very heavy penalties.’

“The order was under the immediate protection of the Pope, and was free from episcopal supervision. It was, however, necessary for the bishop to give his benediction to the abbot upon his election, and ordination was received also from the bishop. But novices were received by the abbot, and not the bishop. The professed monks were not necessarily in Holy Orders, but in later times all abbots were raised to priest’s orders if they had not previously been admitted. The ordained monks, though not subject to the ordinary, had power to celebrate in the churches belonging to the order. They had power to take cognizance of cases of adultery, and were able to prove the wills of their tenants and baptise their children. The order was free from Papal subsidies, and also from payment of tithes.”

Scanty and meagre as are the records of the Abbey of Strata Florida, we shall find, as we trace its history down to the period of the dissolution of the monasteries, many little facts that crop up here and there illustrating the foregoing extracts. So far as the excavations have been carried out, we find ample evidence that Strata Florida was built in strict accordance with the usual Cistercian plan; for the Cistercians appear to have adopted very much the same design for all their monasteries; variations occur due to local or other causes, but they are mostly of slight importance, and are, in fact, of the nature of those exceptions which tend rather to prove the general rule than to invalidate it.

From 1164 until 1175, when Cadell, Rhys ap Gruffydd's brother, died at Strata Florida, the writer of the *Chronicle* has given us no information of any events that took place at the monastery; these, however, were no doubt busy years; the work of erecting the church and conventual buildings must have made rapid progress during this period.

In the *Brut y Tywysogion* we get records of the burials of important personages at the abbey, and of some events of importance in connection with the monastery; but we get no information as to the daily life of the inmates, nor in what way they set about erecting the abbey church and the extensive range of conventual buildings, of which only partial remains of the foundations now exist. How or where they obtained the materials, of which they required such enormous quantities, we can only judge by examination of what little is left; of the amount of labour and actual money that must have been expended in rearing the large and extensive structures which they founded on what is even now a remote, and until of late years a singularly inaccessible spot, it is impossible to form an estimate; but if measured by the cost of such work in the present day it would be very large. The stone for the walls was quarried in the hill a little to the east-

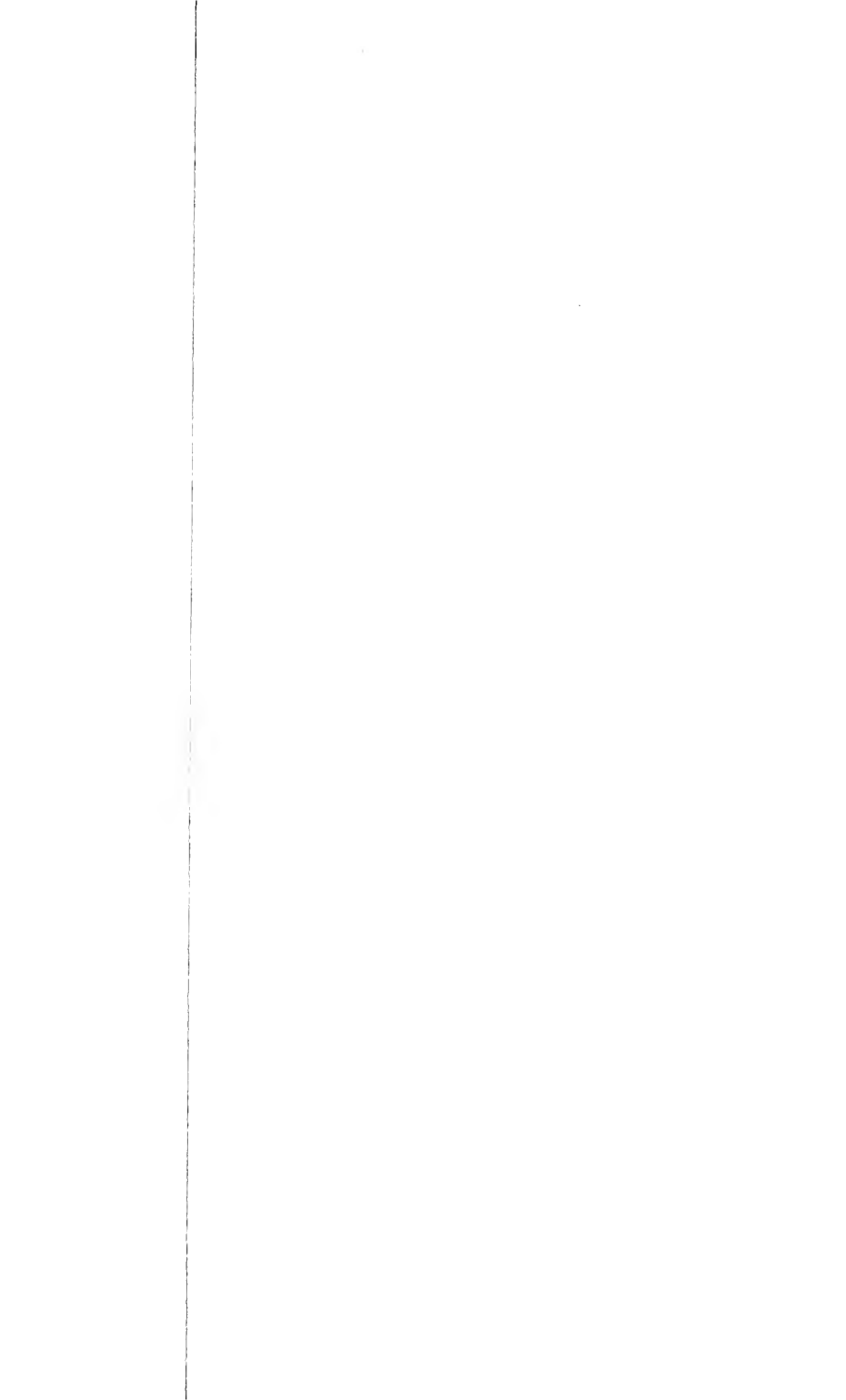
ward of the site ; some of it appears to have been large boulders collected off the surface of the ground, and was no doubt the result of laborious effort in clearing the land to the westward of the monastery for agricultural purposes. Of timber they had abundance and to spare, for the country was in those days much of it dense forest ; and one of the conditions upon which Edward I granted them his charter and gave them compensation (A.D. 1284) for the damage done to the abbey during the Welsh wars in his reign, was that they should cut down the woods which had harboured the rebels ; and even now the old forest-line can still be traced along the sides of the hills by the remains of the growth of stunted oak underwood.

Leland, in his *Itinerary*,<sup>1</sup> refers to this, and says : " Many hilles therabout hath beene well woddid, as evidently by old rotes apperith, but (now in them is almost no woode). The causes be these ; first the wood cut down was never copisid, and this hath beene a great cause of destruction of wood thorough *Wales*. Secondly, after cutting down of woddys, the gottys hath so bytten the young spring that it never grew but lyke shrubbes. Thirddely, men for the nonys destroyed the great woddis that thei shuld not harborow theves."

Traditions of the abbey, handed down from one generation to another, are still remembered by some of the older inhabitants of the district ; and though we may be sometimes inclined to doubt traditional lore, we must bear in mind that in this remote neighbourhood where, until within the last twenty or thirty years, nothing but Welsh was ever spoken, and where the people have even now retained some of the manners and customs related by Giraldus Cambrensis, tradition is more likely to be correct than in places where the schoolmaster has been abroad, and the spread of education has swept away the traditionary recollections of the past.

Among the residents at Strata Florida from whom I

<sup>1</sup> See Appendix.







have received kindly help and assistance in investigating the traditional history of the abbey, I must mention Mr. John Jones, builder, of Pontrhydfendigiad, a hale and hearty old man of seventy-four, who, from the days of his youth, has taken an active interest in the subject, and remembers all the traditions which his grandmother had told him when a child.

One of these traditions related to the place where the monks had a port on the sea-coast, at Llandewi Aberarth, and there are even now some traces of the old landing-place, where fragments of the freestone used at the abbey may still be picked up. This was no doubt the place where the ships the monks employed discharged their cargoes of freestone from Somersetshire or Gloucestershire and from other places, which they used for the dressed stonework in the abbey-church; Mr. Jones described the road along which the stone was hauled by means of oxen to Strata Florida, crossing the great bog of Tregaron at its narrowest place; and here, so says tradition, the blocks of stone were carried on hand-barrows by labourers, the morass being too deep and treacherous for the oxen to cross. Even the rate of wages paid by the monks to their labourers and masons has been handed down by tradition; and it is said that the former were paid one penny a day, and the latter fourpence.

In 1184, as mentioned previously in chapter iii, page 65, Rhys ap Gruffydd granted to the monks by his charter<sup>1</sup> a very extensive tract of land, including therein the property given to the old Abbey of Ystrad Flûr by his grandfather, Rhys ap Tewdwr. The boundary of this, as shown on the map, has been laid down from information supplied by Mr. Jones. As the boundaries of sheep-walks in Wales, it is well known, are handed down from one generation to another by oral tradition, I see no reason to doubt that what has been described to me as the traditional boundary of

<sup>1</sup> See translation of Rhys ap Gruffydd's charter in Appendix.

the estate of “yr hen Fynachlog”, given by Rhys ap Tewdwr to the monks of Ystrad Flûr, is approximately correct on its northern boundary; and the description of the southern boundary exactly corresponds with the boundary described in Rhys ap Gruffydd’s charter.

It will be seen, upon reference to the charter and map, how very extensive was the tract of land given by Rhys ap Gruffydd. He gave the monastery the whole of this large property in fee, describing the names of the principal places, or holdings of his tenants. Some of the names of the tenements still exist, and in the Appendix I have endeavoured to tabulate the place-names mentioned in the charters in such a manner as to show the designation by which they are now known.<sup>1</sup>

It will be observed also that Rhys ap Gruffydd refers to the gift of the sons of Cadwgan, and of his wife Gwenllïan: this donation was a tract of country lying westwards of his own especial grant, and which gave the monks access to the coast at Aberarth; he confirms this grant as chief lord, and it will be noticed that he speaks of it as “of our dominions”.

The monks, no doubt well advised, were not satisfied with the charter of Rhys ap Gruffydd only, they took care to get it confirmed at an early subsequent date by King Henry II; and we can pretty well fix the approximate time of this as between 1184 and the period of the King’s death, which took place in 1189; and in all probability it was granted shortly after the date of Rhys’s charter. He had long before done homage to the King, abdicating any sovereign rights he may have claimed or possessed, and the confirmation of his charter by Henry II is a proof how entirely he had surrendered his claim to the principality of South Wales. Their successors from time to time were also careful to obtain confirmation grants from the Kings of England of the charters of Rhys ap Gruffydd’s

<sup>1</sup> I am indebted to the Rev. Evan Jones, Vicar of Strata Florida, for valuable assistance in tracing these names.

descendants ; and though the monks of Strata Florida were Welshmen, and appear to have sympathised with the revolts which from time to time occurred against the authority of the English monarchs, they were far too astute to rest their title to their lands and possessions solely upon the grants of the Welsh prince and his immediate successors.

In the year following the grant of the charter of Rhys ap Gruffydd, it is recorded that David, Abbot of Strata Florida, died (A.D. 1185). There is a tombstone in the northern angle of the monks' cemetery which has upon it a cross ; it has had a headstone, which has been broken away ; at the foot stands, still intact, the footstone ; the next tombstone has upon it what looks like the outline of a chasuble, carved in low relief, of which only traces now remain, the surface having perished. Upon both these tombstones there are the diagonal axe-marks indicative of mason's-work of the twelfth century, and it is just possible that under one or other of these stones Abbot David was buried. It will be noticed, upon reference to the engraving, that six of the tombstones have at the head, in addition to the headstones, a row of slabs on edge, sunk into the ground ; the purpose of these is evidently to protect the graves during the construction of the south transept. When the interments took place the south transept had not been commenced, and as the subsoil is loose gravel, the builders put in a row of slabs when they cut the foundations of the east wall of the south transept, so that the bodies of those buried in the first six graves might not be disturbed by the soil slipping away during the cutting of the foundations. No other explanation of these slabs seems feasible ; and when examined on the ground, it appears quite the most natural thing that the builders would do to prevent the desecration of the graves of those who had been buried during the progress of the works.

The first recorded death is that of Cadell, Rhys ap Gruffydd's brother, in 1175. We know he took a

pilgrimage to the East : may not the cross upon the first tombstone indicate his grave, and the faint outline of the chasuble indicate the grave of Abbot David?

In the same year died "Howel, son of Ieuav, son of Owain, Lord of Arwystli, and was honourably buried at Strata Florida."<sup>1</sup> He was descended from Trahaern ap Caradoc, who was slain at the battle of Carno in 1080, and resided at Talgarth, Trefeglwys. He obtained Arwystli as a marriage portion with his wife, Merinedd, daughter of Gruffydd ap Cynan.<sup>2</sup>

In the year 1161, Howel ap Ieuav, through treachery, got possession of the Castle of Tafalwern, in Cyfeilioc, from Owain Gwynedd, his brother-in-law. Owain entered Arwystli with a considerable force, retook Tafalwern, and advanced as far as Llandinam ; here Howel, with about three hundred of the men of Arwystli, attacked Owain's forces near the banks of the Severn, and attempted to recover some of the spoil which they were carrying away to Gwynedd, but was defeated ; Howel and his men took to flight, but scarcely a third of them escaped. Owain Cyfeilioc claimed Arwystli as part of his territory as chief lord, but he was dispossessed by Rhys ap Gruffydd in 1166, to whom it was confirmed by Henry II in 1171, and it was subsequently reconquered by Gwenwynwyn, the son of Owain Cyfeilioc, in 1197, after the death of Rhys ap Gruffydd.

Part of the possessions of the Abbey of Strata Florida was the rectory of Llangurig, in Arwystli. In the *Valor Ecclesiasticus*, temp. 26 Hen. VIII, it is valued at 24 marks per annum ; in the *Compt' Ministorum*, 32 Hen. VIII, it is valued at £10 per annum. In the *History of the Parish of Llangurig*, by Messrs. Hamer and Lloyd, 1875, they say :

"As Llangurig was the only part of Arwystli which belonged to the Abbey of Strata Florida, the following entry in the

<sup>1</sup> *Brut y Tywysogion*, Rolls ed., p. 233.

<sup>2</sup> Yorke's *Royal Tribes*, p. 126.

Taxation of 1291, under the head, '*In Decanat. Arostli*', refers to the value of the rectory of that date:—

"Beneficia Abb'is de Strata Florida . £16 0 0

"From the *Valor Ecclesiasticus* of Henry VIII, we learn that the vicarage was then rated at £9 9s. 10d., the sources of revenue, etc., being as follows:—

Tithes of corn and hay, per ann.	. £1	6	8	
" wool and lambs	. 4	0	0	
Oblations (four in the year)	. 4	13	4	
Value of glebe land, per ann.	. 0	2	0	
				10 2 0

"Thence in reprisals:—

Yearly procuration to the Bishop	. 10	0	
" " at visitation	. 2	2	
			12 2

Clear yearly value	... £9	9	10
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Thence a tenth	... 19	0"
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It is not improbable that Howel ap Ieuav was the benefactor who conferred the tithes and rectory of Llangurig upon the Abbey of Strata Florida; there is no reference to Llangurig in any of the charters of Rhys ap Gruffydd or his descendants, and Howel is the only lord of Arwystli who is mentioned as having been buried at Strata Florida. Llangurig was at that time the mother-church of a wide and extensive district, and comprised the existing parish, as well as the parishes of Llanidloes, Trefeglwys, and Llandinam.<sup>1</sup>

"Shortly after the dissolution of the monastery, we find the rectorial tithes were in possession of Lady Dorothy Devereux, daughter (by Anne, his wife, daughter of Henry Stafford, Duke of Buckingham) of George Hastings, Earl of Huntingdon, and relict of Sir Richard Devereux, Knt., eldest son of Walter, Lord Viscount Hereford, K.G., who died in 1558.

<sup>1</sup> I am indebted to Mr. E. R. Morris, late of Homestay, Newtown, for this fact.

Sir Richard died in the lifetime of his father, leaving issue a son and heir, Walter, Lord Viscount Hereford, who was created Earl of Essex and Ewe. Subsequently the great tithes passed into the family of Stedman (who had likewise possession of the Abbey of Strata Florida), and thence to the Powells of Nanteos, who held them as late as the year 1722. But before the year 1762 they were sold by the late Dr. Powell, of Nanteos, to Sir W. W. Wynn, Bart., and are now held by the Baronet of Wynnstay." (*History of the Parish of Llangurig*, by Hamer and Lloyd, p. 33.)

According to the *Brut y Tywysogion* (Rolls ed., p. 233), in 1186, "about the month of July, the convent of Strata Florida removed to Rhedynog Velen in Gwynedd." In the margin of the *Book of Basingwerk* there is a note opposite this entry, in which it is stated that this place is "Maenan", where the monks of Aberconway were removed by Edward I. We have here the record of the foundation of the Cistercian Abbey of Conway by a colony of monks from Strata Florida. In the British Museum, among the *Harley Charters*, is a document, No. 76, D. II (see Appendix), which is a confirmation of a final sentence of the general chapter at Cîteaux upon some dispute between the Abbeys of Margam and Caerleon; it is remitted to the Abbots of Tintern and Dore, who are requested to see to its execution, and it recites that Caerleon is a daughter of Strata Florida. We may therefore assume that Caerleon was also founded by a colony from that abbey. In 1192, the *Chronicle* records the death of Gruffydd, son of Cadwgan. We have no clue as to who this person was, but it may be that the entry refers to one of "the sons of Cadwgan", whose donation appears in Rhys ap Gruffydd's charter; and who, being a benefactor to the abbey, his death was noted and recorded in the *Brut y Tywysogion*. During the troublous years subsequent to the death of Rhys ap Gruffydd, while his sons were fighting among them-

selves for his inheritance, the monks of Strata Florida appear to have gone on steadily building their monastery; to secure their possessions and complete the title thereto, they obtained confirmatory charters in 1198 from Rhys and Maelgwn, the two sons of Rhys ap Gruffydd, who at this time were in possession of their father's territory and estates; Gruffydd, the eldest son, being now a prisoner at Corfe Castle.

Maelgwn's charter is dated 11th February 1198; and Rhys, son of his elder brother Gruffydd, is the first witness who is made to join in the grant, "*qui hanc donacionem nostram sua donacione roboravit.*" The young Rhys must have been a mere child at this time. Rhys's charter is dated 19th January 1198, and he refers therein to certain lands which are described in the charters of Maelgwn, his brother, "who first gave them", and then goes on to say that "I, Rese, gave these lands to the aforesaid monks for ever". This is somewhat confusing; but I think we may pretty safely assume that both Maelgwn and Rhys (Rhys Gryg) were benefactors to Strata Florida, and that their charters increased the possessions of the monastery as well as confirmed former gifts.<sup>1</sup>

Immediately upon King John's accession to the throne of England, the monks of Strata Florida applied for, and obtained a confirmation charter from the King, dated at Worcester, on the 11th of April 1200, the first year of his reign; in this document all the charters of previous donors are confirmed, except as to the Comot of Cardigan, which Maelgwn had sold to the King. The *Brut y Tywysogion* thus refers to this transaction between King John and Maelgwn: "In that year (1200) Maelgwn, son of Rhys, sold Aberteivi, the key of all Wales, for a trifling value, to the English, for fear of and out of hatred to his brother Gruffydd." In the following year we have the record of the completion of the Abbey Church of Strata Florida; this important event is described in few words, but they con-

<sup>1</sup> See Charters in Appendix.

vey much when read in the light of the recent excavations. The *Chronicle* says it "had been erected of splendid workmanship"; and no doubt it was at that time the finest ecclesiastical building in Wales, exceeding in size the cathedral church, which Bishop Peter de Leia was then rebuilding at St. David's. We know now with what care and at what great expense the monks of Strata Florida had, during a period of about thirty-five years, gone on steadily erecting their church and conventual buildings, and we can see from what is left of the ruins its gradual growth from 1166 to 1201. The earliest portion built was in all probability the presbytery; this was succeeded by the north transept, tower, and south transept; then the nave would follow, probably not the entire length at once; the variations in the mouldings of the arches of the arcades in the nave seem to point to their being built at different times, and probably under the charge of different master-masons.

In this year died, at Strata Florida, Gruffydd, the eldest son and successor of Rhys ap Gruffydd, "after having taken upon him the religious habit; and there he was buried."<sup>1</sup>

Powell, in his *History of Wales* (ed. 1774, p. 220), thus refers to the custom of burying in the robes of a monk, which at this time prevailed: "A.D. 1200, Gruffydd ap Conan ap Owen Gwynedd died; and was buried in a monk's cawl in the abbey of Conway, which way of burying was very much practised (especially by the better sort) in those days; for the monks and friars had deluded the people into a strong conceit of the merits of it, and had firmly persuaded them it was highly conducive to their future happiness to be thus interred. But this superstition, together with the propagators of it, they had lately received from England: for the first abbey or monastery we read of in Wales since the destruction of that famous house of Bangor, which favoured of Romish dregs, was the

<sup>1</sup> *Brut y Tywysogion*, Rolls ed., p. 257.



Ty-Gwyn,<sup>1</sup> built in the year 1146, after which they mightily increased and spread over all the country."

Gruffydd ap Rhys's tenure of power as lord of South Wales in succession to his father was very short. After the death of Rhys ap Gruffydd on the 24th April 1197, he proceeded to the King's Court, and having been acknowledged as the lawful heir, he did homage to the King for his dominions, and returned home to take possession. His brother Maelgwn had formed an alliance with Gwenwynwyn, son of Owain Cyveilioc of Powys, and with his aid he gained the Castle of Aberystwith, captured his brother Gruffydd, and delivered him into the custody of Gwenwynwyn. The following year the lord of Powys delivered over Prince Gruffydd ap Rhys to the English in exchange for the Castle of Carreghova, near Oswestry, which he had besieged and taken, and Gruffydd was imprisoned in Corfe Castle. Gwenwynwyn then recovered Arwystli, which had been taken from his father by Rhys ap Gruffydd in 1167, and it remained in the possession of his family, with slight interruptions, until it passed into English hands by the marriage of the last of the line, a daughter, who married Sir John Charleton, first Baron of Powys.

Shortly after this, Gwenwynwyn, who had conceived the design of liberating his country and extending it to its ancient limits, raised a large army and besieged William de Breos in his Castle of Payn in Radnor. He lay three weeks without effect before it, whilst de Breos had time to collect assistance, and was reinforced by the Justiciary of England, Geoffery Fitzpeter,<sup>2</sup> who released Gruffydd ap Rhys (de Breos's son-in-law), and put him at the head of his country-

<sup>1</sup> Whitland Abbey.

<sup>2</sup> Fitzpeter was an eminent character. He was dreaded by John, who yet dared not to remove him from his great office. When John heard of his death, he exultingly cried, "And is he gone, then? Well, let him go to hell, and join Archbishop Hubert. By God's foot I am now for the first time King of England." (*Matthew Paris*.)

men, who joined him in great numbers.<sup>1</sup> Gwenwynwyn was defeated in the open plain near the castle. After this Gruffydd appears to have obtained possession from Maelgwn of all Cardiganshire, except Cardigan and Ystrad Meurig Castles. As to the former, "Maelgwn swore upon several relics, in the presence of monks, after taking hostages for peace from Gruffydd",<sup>2</sup> that he would deliver up the castle on a certain day. He disregarded his oath, giving up neither the castle nor the hostages, but, as we have seen, treacherously sold it to King John. This perfidious betrayal of his country's cause brought upon Maelgwn the malediction of the clergy and people of all Wales (*Annales Cambrie*).

For this surrender of Cardigan Castle and the adjacent commot of Iscoed Bisberwern, or Isherwen, the King, by his charter, bearing date at Poitiers on the 3rd of December 1199, "concedes to his beloved and faithful Maelgwn, son of Rhys, for his homage and faithful service, the four cantreds which are called Caerdigan, together with Cilgerran and Emlyn, as well those of them which he has already acquired as those which are yet to be acquired from the King's enemies, so that Maelgwn should serve him faithfully, and remain faithful to him against all men. And Maelgwn, for himself and his heirs, gives up and 'quit claims' to the King and his heirs for ever the Castle of Caerdigan, with a certain commot adjacent to the said Castle."<sup>3</sup>

"A few months later Maelgwn obtained a confirmation of the King's grant, whereby the latter concedes to him the four cantreds of Cardigan, excepting the Castle of Cardigan and the commot called Bisberwern, adjacent to the said castle, which the aforesaid Maelgwn has given up to the King." This charter, which is dated from Worcester on the 11th of April in the 1st of King John (1200), is witnessed by Geoffrey Fitz-

<sup>1</sup> Yorke's *Royal Tribes of Wales*, pp. 62-63.

<sup>2</sup> *Brut y Tywysogion*, Rolls ed., p. 255.

<sup>3</sup> *Rot. Chart.*, a'o 1 Joh., memb. 2.

peter, Earl of Essex, William Mareschal, Earl of Pembroke, William Earl of Surrey, and others.<sup>1</sup>

It will be observed that the date of this second charter to Maelgwn corresponds with that to the monks of Strata Florida before referred to, and that the witnesses thereto are identical. This would seem to prove that it was through Maelgwn's influence that this charter was obtained, confirming the grants of himself and his brother Rhys Gryg, and that at this time Gruffydd ap Rhys was not in favour at the English Court.

In the October following Gruffydd receives a summons and a safe conduct to come to the King's Court, bearing date from Chelewerth (Chelsworth), on the 22nd October 1200; and the King issues his letters patent to the Sheriff of Pembroke, apprising them of the issue of the above safe conduct, and charging them, in the meanwhile, to levy no forfeit on him or his lands.<sup>2</sup>

The Rev. the Hon. G. T. O. Bridgeman, in his *History of the Princes of South Wales*, p. 76, thus refers to this matter :—

“Whether this summons was obeyed or not I do not find. I

<sup>1</sup> *Rot. Chart.*, a'o 1 Joh., memb. 15. Some doubt seems to have existed as to which of these charters was first issued. King Richard died on Tuesday, April 6th, 1199; and at first sight it might be thought that this charter, which is dated at Worcester on April 11th, in the first year of his reign, had been issued immediately after the news of Richard's death had been received in England. It would seem to have been so understood by Maelgwn, the son of this Maelgwn, from the order in which he produced the two charters in a trial at Westminster in 25 Hen. III.\* But I have followed the editor of the Record edition of the *Charter Rolls*, and also Sir Harry Nicholas, who shows in his *Chronology of History* that the first regnal year of King John commenced on May 27th, 1199. Moreover, the Prince was apparently in Normandy at the time of his brother's death. Mr. Eyton supports this reading, and says that April 11th, *anno regni Regis Johannis primo*, is certainly April 11th, 1200. (*History of the Princes of South Wales*, by the Rev. the Hon. G. T. O. Bridgeman, M.A., pp. 75-76.)

<sup>2</sup> *Rot. Chart.*, a'o 9 Joh., memb. 28 in dorso.

\* See Appendix.

imagine that Griffith was at this time in possession of the whole of Cardigan, except the Castle of Cardigan with its adjacent commot of Bisberwern (which would have included but a small portion of the commot of Iscoed). And perhaps we may also except the Castles of Dynherth and Ystrad Meuric, which may possibly have remained in the hands of Maelgon with their adjacent lordships.

"It would seem, from the King's letter having been addressed to the Sheriff of Pembroke, and the barons, knights and others of Ros and Pembroke, that Griffith also held lands in those parts. These lands will have involved the Castle of Cilgerran and the adjoining lordship of Eulyn, which Griffith had recently taken from Maelgon. It is possible that he may have also held the commot or lordship of Trefgarn in the cantrev of Rhos, which was subsequently held by his descendants under the Earls of Pembroke; but with respect to this records are deficient.

"We have no mention, at this period, of Ystrad Tywy, and I am unable to discover whether Griffith retained any portion of his father's dominions in those parts. We shall see that he subsequently took possession of the Castle of Llandovery and the cantrev Bychan upon the death of his younger brother Meredith,<sup>1</sup> which had probably been recovered from the Normans, in 1198, at the same time with the Castle of Dynevor and the cantrev Mawr; and I assume that the latter had fallen to the share of his other brother, Res Grig. The remainder of Carnarthen was probably in the hands of the English at this time; as also by far the greater portion of Pembroke or West Wales.

"Meredith ap Res, the younger brother of Griffith, was slain by the Englishmen of Kidwelly at Carnwyllaon, and Griffith took possession of his castle at Llandovery and the cantrev Bychan (or little cantrev), in which it was situated. And

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<sup>1</sup> "1201. A little while afterwards, about the feast of St. Peter and St. Paul, Maredudd, son of Rhys, an extremely courteous young man, the terror of his enemies, the love of his friends, being like a lightning of fire between armed hosts, the hope of the South Wales men, the dread of England, the honour of the cities, and the ornament of the world, was slain at Carnwyllon; and Gruffudd, his brother, took possession of his castle at Llanymddyvri. And the cantrev, in which it was situated, was taken possession of by Gruffudd, his brother. And immediately afterwards, on the feast of St. James the Apostle, Gruffudd, son of Rhys, died at Strata Florida, after having taken upon him the religious habit; and there he was buried." (*Brut y Tywysogion*, Rolls ed., p. 257.)

within a month of this time, namely, 'on the feast of St. James the Apostle (July 25th, 1201), Griffith ap Res (himself also) died at Strata Florida, after having taken upon him the religious habit; and there he was buried with great solemnity'.<sup>1</sup> 'This Gruffyth', says Powell, 'was a wise and discreet gentleman, and one that was likely to bring all South Wales to good order and obedience, who in all things followed his father's steppes, whom as he succeeded in government, so he did in all martiall prowes and nobilitie of mind; but ernell fortune, which frowned upon that countrie, suffered him not long to enjoy his land.' He married Maud or Mallt, daughter of William de Braose, lord of Brecknock, by whom he had two sons, Res and Owen, who ought to have succeeded to their father's dominions. But Res Grig, the brother of Griffith, appropriated to himself the cantrev Bychan with the town of Llandovery; and Maelgon took possession of the Castle of Cilgerran. I presume also that Maelgon also re-entered upon the land of Cardigan and withheld it from his brother's children.

"About this time Llewelyn ap Jerwerth ap Owen Gwyneth was upon the throne of North Wales, an able and active prince who assumed the sovereignty of all Wales, and claimed the allegiance of all its princes and nobles, as a right accorded to his family by the ordinance of Roderic and the laws of Howel Dha, 'notwithstanding that of late years, by the negligence of his predecessors, they had not used their accustomed duties; but some held of the King of England, others ruled as supreme powers within their owne countries. Therefore, he called a Parliament of all the lords in Wales, which for the most part appeared before him, and swore to be his liegemen.'<sup>2</sup>

"Wenwynwyn, Prince of Powis, at first a dissentient, was subsequently won over to the Prince, and Llewelyn appears to have succeeded at this juncture in uniting the interests of the whole principality against the English."

Immediately after the death of Gruffydd ap Rhys we find that his son Rhys gives a charter to the Abbey of Strata Florida, which confirms all the donations of his father and grandfather, and all that his uncles had given. This charter sets forth the boundaries of the estates granted by the different donors to the Abbey, and we now for the first time come across the Breconshire property, Aberdihonw, which is situated a short

<sup>1</sup> Powell's *History of Wales*.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid*.

distance below the town of Builth on the banks of the River Wye. We have, moreover, a grant of "all the pasture of Cantrev Mawr and Cantrev Bychan, and of the four cantreds of Cardigan, and especially of Penwedic"; also of the whole of the land which is between the rivers Tywy and Yrvon, in the county of Brecon.

Jones, in his *History of Brecknockshire* (vol. ii, p. 216), thus refers to the possessions of the Abbey of Strata Florida in that county :

"From the names of places, with some difficulty reducible into Welsh, we find that the possessions of the Monastery of Strata Florida comprehended Cwmytoddwr in Radnorshire, and all the lands between Towy and Elan to the borders of North Wales, Llanwrthwl, part of Llanafanfawr, the whole of Llanvihalangel Abergwessin, Llandewi Abergwessin and Llanwrtyd, part of Llangamarch, crossing the Irvon at the fall of the Camddwr, the whole of the present parish of Tyr yr Abad and part of Llandilo'r fân in Breconshire, but much of this territory was lost, either in consequence of intestine commotions or by exchange, so that only a comparatively small number of acres remained on the south of the Irvon and on the borders of Carmarthenshire: these not being worth the attention of Sir John Pryce, continued with the Crown from the time of the dissolution of religious houses, until Edward the Sixth, in the sixth year of his reign, granted nearly the whole of this tract (demised to John Lewis of Harpton, Esq.), by the description of the "Grange of *Haberdoneth* [*Aberdihonw*], to William Earl of Pembroke, and William Clerk, in fee, to hold as tenants *in capite*. Though this conveyance seems intended for the benefit of the grantees, it does not appear that they took possession under it, or at least part of it was reserved; for by a deed dated in 1588, Queen Elizabeth demised to Edward Wymark and his heirs for ever, lands called Tyr Glandillas, Kaer Kerdill (perhaps Caer Cenfydd), parcel of the *Grange of Aberdeconyth*, abutting certain lands called Pell Borro<sup>1</sup> and Llidiade reollydd (Llydiad yr heolydd) on the north, and certain lands called Keven yeoly (Cefn Ioli) on the west, to lands called Pantybroynssion and the river Nant y chure on the south, and to Blan hijgoome (Blanhirgwni), on the east, to be holden as of the manor of East Greenwich

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<sup>1</sup> Pwll Ierw, the water-cress pool; Aberberwbwll is a name of a farm in this parish (Tyr yr abad, or the Abbot's land), not far from the confines of Carmarthenshire.

in socage, and not by knight's service, rendering a small annual rent. Wymark, by deed, conveyed his interest to John Lewis of Old Radnor: one of the descendants of this Lewis of Harpton, his great-grand-daughter Margaret, married John Gwyn of Llanelwedd, and their son, David Gwyn, married another of the same family; by these marriages the estates came to the Gwyns of Tymawr, and now of Glanbrân. Sackville Gwynne of the latter place, at present, possesses the whole parish [Tyr yr abad], as three or four of his ancestors have done before him."

With reference to the grant in the charter of "all the Pasture of Cantrev Mawr and Cantrev Bychan and of the four Cantreds of Cardigan, and especially of Penwedic", we have an illustration of the fact, "that the owner of a Cantrev or Lordship was sole owner of the uninclosed land within it, and exercised the right to grant rights of pasturage over all or any part of it; a right which the law recognised as common in gross, exercisable only by an ecclesiastical or lay corporation, but not to the prejudice of the lord's rights, nor to the exclusion of the commoners who by grant or usage were entitled to depasture on the common lands the estimated number of cattle which could be maintained during the winter on their ancient tene-ment."<sup>1</sup> It is probable that in the early part of the thirteenth century the monks may have had almost the sole enjoyment of these mountain pastures, and that they became the pioneers of cultivation in these wild and thinly-populated tracts of country.

In the ecclesiastical taxation of Pope Nicholas (A.D. 1291), under the head of "Fructus", or "Exitus Animalium", we obtain an account of the live stock which each monastic house was supposed to possess in the archdeaconries of Cardigan and Carmarthen. The sheep and cattle are stated to be "salva custodia", which leads to the inference that they were under the care of a shepherd, and not in the hands of a tenant.

<sup>1</sup> See paper in the *Archæologia Cambrensis* for July 1888, entitled "Notes to the Account of Cwmhir Abbey, Radnorshire", by R. W. Banks, Esq.

That at this time the principal wealth of Strata Florida Abbey was derived from its flocks and herds we see by a license given by King John, on the 29th of May 1212, to the abbot and monks to sell and export their wool.<sup>1</sup> And it seems pretty clear from the terms of the license that they had to declare at the port at which it was shipped that it was their own produce, and that at that time wool could not be exported without payment of duty.

King John, at the same time that he confirmed the charters of Strata Florida at Worcester, on the 11th of April 1200, made a further grant of freedom from toll, passage, and pontage, and of all customs which appertained to the crown, for themselves and all their goods which their men were able to affirm belonged to their demesne. This charter, though granted on the same day as the confirmation charter before referred to, is given by the hand of the Archdeacon of Wells and the Archdeacon of Gloucester, and is witnessed, among others, by William Briwerro, who also witnesses the license to export wool in 1212.

The confirmation charter is given by the hand of Hubert, Archbishop of Canterbury, and is witnessed by three of the most powerful nobles in the kingdom at that time, William Mareschal, Earl of Pembroke, Geoffrey Fitzpeter, Earl of Essex, and William de Longespée, Earl of Salisbury.

In the *Brut y Tywysogion*, under the date 1204, we have recorded another of those treacherous assassinations which were so common in Wales at that time; and it is one more of the many crimes which were laid to the charge of Maelgwn ap Rhys. The *Chronicle* states that "Howel the Saxon, son of the Lord Rhys, was stabbed at Cemaes, through treachery, by the men of Maelgwn, his brother, of which stab he died, and was buried at Strata Florida in the same manner as his brother Gruffydd, after having taken upon him the habit of religion." The Rev. the Hon. G. T. O.

<sup>1</sup> See Appendix.



Bridgeman, in a note (p. 52, *History of the Princes of South Wales*) upon the death of Howel the Saxon, states that "Howel, who was called Sais or the Englishman (probably on account of his long residence in England as a hostage in the King's custody), was a natural son of Res by Ysteder, the daughter of Caradoc ap Llowrodd (*Her. Vis. Wal.*, vol. ii, p. 99). Though he escaped mutilation at the hands of the English, a fate but too common with hostages in those days, he is said to have afterwards been cruelly blinded by his brother Anarawd, another of Res's illegitimate sons, about the year 1194. Notwithstanding this calamity, he continued for some years to take his part in the petty warfare of his time. According to the *Annales Cambriae*, he died in 1199, on his return towards Wales from the court of King John, at Striguil, where, as some say, he was seized with a sickness which carried him off, or, as others say, he was slain by the Normans. But, according to the *Brut*, he was treacherously assassinated at Cemaes in the year 1204-5 by his brother Maelgon's men, and was buried near his brother Griffith at Strata Florida."

In reading the records of the deaths and burials at Strata Florida, one cannot but be struck with the fact that in so many instances it is recorded that the individual mentioned died *at* Strata Florida; and it would appear as if in those days it was not uncommon for a person stricken with sickness to repair to the abbey. The monks were the only people who possessed any medical skill or knowledge at that time, and I think we can see by the records that one of the most important buildings belonging to a Cistercian monastery, the infirmary, was doubtless much patronised by all conditions of men, and when any person of rank and importance died there, the conventual scribe duly entered the fact in the monastic chronicle.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Mr. St. John Hope, in a note to me on this subject, says that "the public were certainly not admitted to the monk's 'farmery'." It is possible some other part of the building was appropriated to this purpose.

On the 29th of December 1210, Maud or Mahalt de Breos, the wife of Gruffydd ap Rhys, died at Llanbadarn Fawr, and was laid by the side of her husband in the abbey church of Strata Florida. In what part of the church Maud and her husband were buried it is of course impossible to say, but during the course of the excavations it was discovered that there had been two burials in the northern chapel of the north transept, one on each side of the altar, marked by crosses of dark coloured tiles in the pavement; in the southern chapel of the south transept there were discovered remains of two altar-tombs and fragments of tracery and sculpture of early fourteenth century work; in the vestry was found the vault in which had been buried the persons to whose memory the altar-tombs had been erected, the vault being constructed partially under the floor of the chapel in which the effigies had been placed. Of the effigies the merest fragments remained, but, oddly enough, portions of two pairs of hands joined in the attitude of prayer were found, the one delicate in form, shaped like that of a woman; the other, coarser-looking, and evidently intended for a man's hands. Three other ladies were buried at Strata Florida: Gwenllïan, daughter of Maelgwn the younger, who died at Llanfihangel Gelynrod, and was buried in the chapter-house in 1253: a sister, Margaret, wife of Owain ap Meredydd, Lord of Cydewain; Isabel, daughter of Richard Clare, Earl of Hereford, and wife to William Gam, Lord of Gower, who was buried in the abbey, A.D. 1210. The number of burials recorded in the chapter-house is ten<sup>1</sup>, commencing with Rhys, son of Gruffydd ap Rhys and his wife, Maud de Breos, 1222, and ending with Owain, a grandson of Gruffydd and Maud, in 1275.

The chapter-house was built at a later period than the abbey-church; the architecture is of Early English type, and its completion in all probability was not very long anterior to the date of the first recorded interment therein. Among the discoveries made

<sup>1</sup> See Appendix for list of burials in the abbey.

during the recent excavations was the tombstone which was found in the chapter-house, illustrated in the plate opposite, and referred to in a note in chapter v. There is something very peculiar in the discovery of these human remains in the chapter-house, all so carefully reburied under this stone. At the time of the dissolution, and when the church and chapter-house were desecrated and turned to secular uses, did some of the dispossessed monks reverentially take up the bodies of those who were buried in this portion of the abbey, and lay them in this one shallow grave? Whoever did it, they were careful to place the skulls all at the head of the grave, and the other bones appeared to have been laid in some kind of order. Subsequent to the reburial a fire took place, which destroyed the roof and other timber-work of the chapter-house, and the tombstone, which is of Bath oolite, has been much calcined by the intense heat, and broken to pieces.

No other trace of a grave or tombstone was found in the chapter-house; from the fragments of floor-tiles found in the *débris*, it apparently had an encaustic and incised tile floor, and in all probability the graves were covered with inscribed slabs. These were no doubt of freestone, and being of a convenient size and useful as building material, may have been carried away at an early period after the dissolution. The people who rifled the graves, possibly, had sufficient respect for the mighty dead who were laid there, to collect and re-bury their scattered bones; let us hope it was so, and that the simple stone that now covers them protects all that is left of the mortal remains of many of the princes and lords of South Wales, the descendants of the once great and powerful Prince Rhys ap Gruffydd.

In 1212, the Abbey of Strata Florida narrowly escaped destruction. In the Record Office [*Ex. Rot. Lit. Claus.*, vol. i, f. 122] is an order of King John, addressed to Falkes de Breauté, seneschal of Cardiff,

commanding him to destroy the monastery which had harboured his enemies. Pope Innocent had, in 1212, absolved from all fealty and allegiance to the King of England, the princes and nobles, and all other persons high and low, and threatened with excommunication all who associated or held converse with him. Llewelyn ap Iorwerth, encouraged by this interdict, summoned Gwenwynwyn, Prince of Powys Uchaf; Gruffydd Maelor, Prince of Powys Isaf; and Meredydd ap Rotpert, ruler of Cydwain; and having mustered the entire military forces of Gwynedd and Powys, Llewelyn speedily won every Norman castle in North Wales, except Rhuddlan and Conway, and then marching into Powys Uchaf, laid siege to Mathrafal Castle, which Robert Vipont had lately fortified.

King John, enraged at the news of this formidable insurrection, levied an army with the avowed intention of exterminating the Welsh nation; and, on arriving at Nottingham,<sup>1</sup> before he ate or drank, he ordered the twenty-eight royal Welsh children, whom he held as hostages, to be hung on gibbets, in revenge for their fathers' breach of faith towards him. Letters from his daughter, the wife of Llewelyn ap Iorwerth, and from the King of Scotland, reached him on the same day, warning him that there was a conspiracy among his own nobles to either slay him, or deliver him into the hands of his enemies. Dismayed at this information, he shut himself up for a fortnight in Nottingham Castle, and then recovering from his terror, marched onward with his army to Chester, where, alarmed by renewed warnings, he disbanded his forces.<sup>2</sup>

The sympathies of the monks of Strata Florida were no doubt with their countrymen in this revolt against the English King, more especially as John had been excommunicated by the Pope. Falkes de Breauté was either unable or unwilling to carry out the King's

<sup>1</sup> Roger of Wendover, A.D. 1212; Florence of Worcester, second continuation.

<sup>2</sup> *History of Wales*, by Miss Jane Williams, pp. 309-10.

command, and the Abbey on this occasion escaped the devastation which befell it at two later periods owing to the wars in the time of King Edward I, and the rebellion of Owain Glendower in the reign of Henry IV.

In 1216 took place the partition of the estates of Prince Rhys ap Gruffydd between his sons, Maelgwn and Rhys Gryg, and his grandsons, Rhys and Owain, the sons of Gruffydd, Prince Rhys' eldest son; Prince Llewelyn ap Iorwerth was the President of the Court on this occasion. Llewelyn had, during the latter part of the reign of King John, become all powerful in North and South Wales, and was the last of the Welsh princes who really exercised regal rights throughout the principality. Having married King John's daughter he became the most powerful ruler in Wales. The subdivision of the principalities of South Wales and Powys had greatly reduced the power of their hereditary princes, and the supremacy of Llewelyn seems to have been now generally acknowledged by them whenever the Welsh were in a position to repudiate the King's authority.<sup>1</sup>

When, therefore, Rhys, son of Gruffydd, son of the Lord Rhys, died, in August 1222, "after a long and lingering disorder", and was buried at Strata Florida, "after taking penance and communion and confession, and the habit of religion",<sup>2</sup> we find King Henry III issuing his writ to *Leulinus princeps Norwallie*, commanding him to take into the King's hand all the land which *Resus filius Griffini*, deceased, held of the King *in capite*, and keep it in safe custody until the King should otherwise order concerning it. This writ was issued at Oxford on August 11 of that year, in the presence of Hubert de Burgh and others<sup>3</sup>; and according to the *Brut y Tywysogion* (Rolls ed., p. 311), Owain, his "only brother, obtained part of his terri-

<sup>1</sup> Bridgeman's *History of the Princes of South Wales*, p. 89.

<sup>2</sup> *Brut y Tywysogion*, Rolls ed., p. 311.

<sup>3</sup> Excerpta e Rot. Fin., 6 Hen. III (1222). (Bridgeman's *History of the Princes of South Wales*.)

tory, and another part, Llywelyn, son of Iorwerth, gave to Maelgwn", son of Rhys ap Gruffydd.

In 1225 Cadivor, Abbot of Strata Florida, died, and the name of his successor has not been handed down to us, unless it was Gruffydd, who "made peace with King Henry III" in 1248, "in respect of a debt which the monastery owed for a long time previously, he forgiving to the abbot and convent half the debt, namely, fifty marks, and three hundred marks the other paid, and was to pay as much more, under settled limitations, as may be found in the register of the monastery."<sup>1</sup>

The new abbot obtained a confirmation charter from Henry III, dated at Westminster the 10th day of November in the 14th year of his reign (A.D. 1229). This charter confirms all the previous charters, and is fully recited in the charter of Henry VI. See Appendix.

The following year, or early in 1231, the restless and ambitious Maelgwn, son of Prince Rhys ap Gruffydd, died at Llanerchaeron, and was buried in the chapter-house at Strata Florida. The monk who records this event does not add any eulogy upon his life or his deeds, and though a liberal benefactor to the Abbey, the chronicle simply records his burial. From the time he rebelled against his father in 1192 until his death, his life was a continued succession of petty warfare, generally with members of his own family, occasionally against the English in alliance with Llewelyn ap Iorwerth, at other times against his suzerain allied with his country's foes, varied by assassination of his relatives and neighbours; in fact, he was a typical Welsh noble of the period, ambitious and reckless of human life, ever striving to increase his territory and power, no matter at what cost of human life and suffering, yet for all this he is described as a popular man among his countrymen. He was succeeded by his son Maelgwn, known as Maelgwn the younger, who.

<sup>1</sup> *Brut y Tywysogion*, Rolls ed., p. 335.

during the lifetime of his father grants a charter to Strata Florida, and as it is subsequently confirmed by King Henry III in 1229, it was probably executed shortly before his father's death, and the words he uses would seem to refer to the fact of his being then an old man, as he speaks of him as "my father of venerable memory". In this charter we find that the monasteries of Whitland and Cwmhir had acquired rights of pasturage in Cardiganshire since the date of the last charter to Strata Florida, as he reserves their rights in the following words: "and the whole pasture of Cardigan, except the portions which belong to the monks of Whitehouse and of Cwmhyr, as in the cyrograph [?] are contained".<sup>1</sup> Among the witnesses to this charter are his father, the Lord Maelgwn, son of Rhys, Morgan, son of Rhys, M. [Meredydd], Archdeacon of Cardigan, a son of Rhys ap Gruffydd, who was appointed Archdeacon 1226, and was succeeded in 1228 by Gruffydd ap Meredydd,<sup>2</sup> therefore this would fix the date of the charter of Maelgwn the younger between 1226 and 1227. Archdeacon Meredydd died in 1227 "in the church of St. Mary at Llanbedr Tal Pont Stephan,"<sup>3</sup> and his body was conveyed to Menevia<sup>4</sup>, where he was honourably buried by Iorwerth, Bishop of Menevia, in the church of St. David, near the grave of the Lord Rhys, his father."<sup>5</sup>

In 1235 died Owain ap Gruffydd, the last surviving son of Gruffydd ap Rhys and Maud de Breos. He was buried in the chapter-house at Strata Florida, by the side of his brother Rhys. The monk who recorded his death speaks of him as "a gentleman by race, and courteous in manners, wise, generous, and praiseworthy". He also states that he died "*at* Strata Florida, on the Wednesday after the octave of the

<sup>1</sup> See Appendix.

<sup>2</sup> Jones and Freeman, *History of St. David's*.

<sup>3</sup> Lampeter.

<sup>4</sup> St. David's.

<sup>5</sup> *Brut y Tywysogion*, Rolls ed., p. 317. It will be observed that the *Chronicle* in this instance distinctly states that Rhys ap Gruffydd was buried at St. David's Cathedral. (See *ante*, p. 79.)

Epiphany". Powell, in his *History of Wales*, says that he was "a noble gentleman, and verie well-beloved". He was succeeded in the lordship of Cardigan Uwch Ayron, or North Cardigan, by his son Meredith ap Owain.

The *Annales Cambriæ*, in the year 1236, record the death of Gwenllïan, daughter of the lord Rhys ap Gruffydd, and wife of Ednyfed Vychan. The *Brut y Tywysogion* mentions the death of a daughter named Gwenllïan in 1190, and some authorities say that she was the wife of Ednyfed Vychan. There is evidently some mistake as to this, unless Rhys ap Gruffydd had two daughters named Gwenllïan, which is not at all improbable, and that it was the second Gwenllïan who married Ednyfed, and that the one who died in 1190 was never married. The daughter that died in 1236 was not buried at Strata Florida, but the "Annalist who records her death, and who was probably a monk of Strata Florida, incidentally throws a light upon the seignorial rights of the young lords of Cardigan at this time. He tells us that about the feast of Michaelmas (1236), Maelgon ap Maelgon went to Prince Llewelyn, and by payment of a heavy fine, procured an exchange of lands between himself and Meredith ap Owen, by which the latter gave to Maelgon the Commot of Mevenyth for that of Pennarth. And no sooner was Mevenyth in Maelgon's hands, than he prepared to despoil the monks of Strata Florida of their lands at Strata Meuric, which his ancestors, as well as he himself, had given to the said monks."<sup>1</sup> (*History of the Princes of South Wales*, by the Rev. the Hon. G. T. O. Bridgeman, M.A.)

In 1238, "on the morrow after the feast of St. Luke the Evangelist (October 19th), all the princes of Wales swore fidelity to David, son of Llewelyn, son of Iorwerth, at Strata Florida. And then he took from his brother Gruffydd, Arwystli and Ceriand Cyveiliog, and Mawddwy and Mochnant and Caereinion, leaving to him nothing but

<sup>1</sup> *Annales Cambriæ*, p. 81.



the cantrev of Lleyn itself." (*Brut y Tywysogion*, Rolls ed., p. 327.) Thus the *Chronicle* describes one of the most important events that took place at Strata Florida Abbey. Matthew of Paris informs us that Prince Llewelyn ap Iorwerth the Great, impotent by reason of a palsy, and sore disquieted by his son Gruffydd, summoned all the lords and barons of Wales to Ystradflûr, where each of them swore to remain true and faithful subjects, and did homage to David, Llewelyn's son, whom he had named to succeed him.

Sir Samuel Rush Meyrick remarks as to this: "Those who now visit the spot will scarcely credit at first sight, that the whole country round could furnish accommodation for such a company, or that this could be the theatre of such ceremonies as are solemnised with us under the awful roof of Westminster. But when they call to mind the influence of superstition and the immense territorial possessions of the Abbey, they will have no cause to wonder."

There can be no doubt that the large possessions of the Abbey of Strata Florida were amply sufficient to provide the princes and barons of Wales and their numerous retinues with provisions; the rents of their many granges and farms were paid to a large extent in kind; they would have ample stores in their "cellarium" of oatmeal and corn, and to provide for such an occasion as this they would lay in large quantities of salted meat from their flocks and herds, as well as fish from their lakes and fisheries, both inland and maritime. The extensive range of buildings, of which traces yet remain, would be sufficient to lodge a very large number of their more important guests; doubtless the country in the immediate neighbourhood of the Abbey was more populous than it is now, and many of the retainers would be lodged in the adjacent farm-houses and cottages. The retainer of a Welsh noble at that period would be contented with very rough lodging and coarse fare. We read in Giraldus Cambrensis that at night a series of beds of rushes was spread along

the sides of the hall in the more important houses, and there, covered with the brychan, the guests and their entertainers took their rest. The houses of the farmers and labourers were usually wattled structures, not grouped in towns or villages, but set apart from each other on the lands of the owner. There is a very old cottage a short distance from the abbey on the right hand side of the road leading from Pontrhydfendiad, now used as a cowhouse, exactly of the type described.

The Rev. G. Roberts, in his paper on Strata Florida Abbey, thus eloquently describes this event : “ It must have been a goodly sight to have witnessed the whole chivalry of Wales before the High Altar answering their allegiance to one, whose prowess had faithfully preserved the independence of the Welsh Crown, and invoking the solemnities of religion to confirm the oath of fidelity to his young son, that he might lay his ashes peacefully in the grave, with a well-grounded expectation of leaving a united body of nobles to preserve his son’s rights and his country’s independence. Strata Florida was the Westminster Abbey of Wales ; the veneration of its hallowed character is inseparable from the glory of Wales, when free and under her native government.” (*Arch. Camb.*, vol. iii, p. 122.)

Prince Llewelyn ap Iorwerth had selected his younger son David, whose mother was the Princess Joan, daughter of King John, to succeed him in preference to his elder son Gruffydd, with whom he was at enmity ; all the Welsh lords having sworn allegiance to David, the latter appears to have taken possession of a large extent of territory which his brother held, and, upon the death of their father, a fierce and sanguinary warfare broke out between them. By the interposition of the Bishop of Bangor, David invited his brother to attend a conference, and to treat of peace. Accordingly, under the prelate’s safe conduct, Gruffydd, and Owain his eldest son, set out for the ap-

pointed place, but were treacherously taken prisoners by some of David's emissaries and confined in Criccieth Castle.

King Henry III was jealous of Llewelyn ap Iorwerth's authority over Wales, and most indignant at his having exacted homage<sup>1</sup> to David from the Welsh lords; for, although Llewelyn had been repeatedly constrained during his long reign of over fifty years to bow down before the supreme power of England, he had nevertheless asserted and maintained his paramount sovereignty over the princes of Powys and South Wales. The King made angry communications to the Lords Marchers on the subject, and wrote letters to Llewelyn of reproof, and to David of warning, charging the latter to render homage to his English sovereign before he ever again presumed to claim allegiance from subordinate chiefs.

Llewelyn, anxious for his son's peaceful succession to the principality of Gwynedd, despatched messengers to King Henry, declaring that old age had rendered him unfit for strife and warfare, and willing to renounce such claims as might interrupt the tranquillity of his latter days, and that he would consent to swear fealty, acknowledge the King of England's paramount sovereignty, and bind himself by an indissoluble treaty to aid that monarch to the utmost extent of his power.<sup>2</sup>

A peace was concluded on these terms between Henry and Llewelyn; it was a continuation of the truce that for some little time had subsisted between them after a long succession of sanguinary wars. Prince Llewelyn died in April 1240, and was succeeded by his son David, who now had his brother and rival in prison. In May 1240, David, attended by his barons, did homage to the King at Gloucester; on this occasion "Henry girded his nephew, David ap Llewelyn, with a knightly sword, and conceded to him all

<sup>1</sup> Rymer's *Fœdera*, ed. 1704, t. i, pp. 379-382.

<sup>2</sup> *History of Wales*, by Miss Jane Williams, p. 335.

the lands which his father had lawfully held ; and David wore the lesser diadem, which is called ‘garlonde’, the ‘insigne’ of the principality of North Wales, subjecting himself for all that he held, however, to the King of England” (*Annales de Throkesberia*).<sup>1</sup> In 1244, it is recorded in the *Brut y Tywysogion* (Rolls ed., p. 331), that “Gruffydd, son of Llewelyn, attempted to escape from the King’s prison in London, by throwing a rope through the window of the tower, and descending along the rope, but the rope breaking, he fell and broke his neck.” Gruffydd had been given up to King Henry by his brother David, and committed as a prisoner to the Tower of London ; he appears to have been most treacherously dealt with both by his brother and the King ; his heroic wife, Senena, obtained permission to visit him in the Tower, and he planned with her a mode of escape. “He secretly cut up the tapestry of his apartment, and his sheets and table-cloths, into strips, which he twisted and plaited into a rope, and one night, by means of this frail cable, he commenced a precipitous and perpendicular descent from the top of the Tower, assisted by his son Owain within, while Senena awaited him beyond the walls ; but the great weight of the stalwart and long-imprisoned warrior stretched, strained, and ravelled the cable ; it broke, and he fell from a great height, his head striking the ground at the bottom of the trench, and driving his throat up to the chin into his breast, so that in the early morning of the 1st of March his keepers were saddened by the piteous spectacle of his corpse” (*History of Wales*, by Miss Jane Williams, pp. 342-43). The body of the unfortunate Gruffydd was buried in London, but in the year 1248 the abbots of Strata Florida and Conwy appealed to King Henry to allow it to be removed to Conwy Abbey, and they brought it with them from London to Aberconwy, and

<sup>1</sup> *History of the Princes of South Wales*, by the Rev. the Hon. G. T. O. Bridgeman, p. 115.

there he was eventually laid with the other princes of his family.

The same year that Gruffydd ap Llewelyn was killed in his attempt to escape from the Tower of London, "died Meredydd ap Rotpert, Lord of Cydwain and the Chief Counsellor of Wales, after taking the religious habit at Strata Florida".<sup>1</sup> According to Lewys Dwnn,<sup>2</sup> he bought the lordship of Cydwain from his maternal uncle, Madog ap Samwel, 1210. In 1211 and 1215 he took part with Prince Llewelyn ap Iorwerth against King John; and upon the taking of Kinnerley Castle, in the lordship of Oswestry, by the forces of Llewelyn, during the minority of Henry III in 1222-3, he became security for the performance of the agreement whereby Llewelyn bound himself to make satisfaction for the damage done (Pat., 7 Hen. III, m. 2, *in dorso*). He was also one of those Welsh barons who, in 1241, petitioned the King on behalf of Gruffydd ap Llewelyn, brother of David Prince of Wales. He married Eva, daughter of Meredydd Fychan of Abertanad; by this lady he had five sons: Owain, the eldest, succeeded to his father's estates, and on the 30th of July 1248, he paid three hundred marks to the King, that he might hold the land of Cydwain, which had belonged to his father, and the Bailiff of Montgomery had orders to put him in seizin thereof, after taking his security for the said three hundred marks (*Rot. Fin.*, 32 Hen. III, mem. 2). Owain ap Meredydd, Lord of Cydwain, died in 1261 (*Brut y Tywysogion*).<sup>3</sup> In a very interesting paper by Mr. E. Rowley-Morris, late of Homestay, Newtown, in the *Montgomeryshire Collections*, vol. xvii, p. 69, on "Beander Mill and Lands, Newtown", he thus refers to Meredydd ap Rotpert:

"A short time ago I had an opportunity of examining many of the family papers of the Pryces [of Newtown Hall], now in

<sup>1</sup> *Brut y Tywysogion*, Rolls ed., p. 331.

<sup>2</sup> *Lewys Dwnn*, vol. i, p. 136.

<sup>3</sup> *History of the Princes of South Wales*, by the Hon. and Rev. G. T. O. Bridgeman.

the possession of Wastel Brisco, Esq., and from the perusal of the counterpart of a sublease of theirs, dated about the commencement of the sixteenth century, I became acquainted with the fact that a not inconsiderable portion of the Montgomeryshire estate of the Newtown Hall family came originally into their hands by lease from the abbot and monks of Strata Florida. This portion comprised the Court near Abermule, Brynderwen, Llegodig, Dolforwyn, Abermule Inn, the hamlet of Abermule, also a fulling-mill in Dolforwyn. It was stated in this sublease that the Pryce family had held this property 'from time immemorial', at a rental of £6 per annum. On referring to the *Monasticon*, vol. v, p. 634, I found among the possessions of 'Strata Florida', at the dissolution, 'Abernogle Reddit grangiae, £6'. The obscure way in which the name has been spelt, and the classification under Cardiganshire, may have been the reason why this possession of the abbey has not hitherto been identified and localised. I was able, in a preceding short paper (see *Mont. Coll.*, ix, 306), to identify in Tregynon parish some lands formerly belonging to 'Strata Florida',<sup>1</sup> and I now suggest that both these possessions may have been given to that abbey by Meredydd ap Rotpert, who is said to have been buried there, whose Castle of Dolforwyn overlooks most of the land included in the above reference, and whose demesne, attached to the castle, could only have been separated from the Court-farm by the river Severn."

According to Mr. Morris, "Edward I (on the 6th of January, in the seventh year of that monarch's reign, 1279) granted a charter to Roger Mortimer, which conceded to the latter 'Kerry, Kedewiog and Dolforwyn Castle, also a fair and market at Llanfair,'<sup>2</sup> in Kedewing in Wales', subject to the payment assessed upon 'three knight's fees'. The descendants of Meredydd ap Rotpert probably forfeited this lordship in the wars between Edward I and the Welsh."

As there is no trace of Abermule in the charter of Rhys ap Gruffydd and his descendants, there can be little doubt that Mr. Morris is correct in his statement that the Montgomeryshire property was in all probability the gift of Meredydd ap Rotpert to the Abbey of Strata Florida.

<sup>1</sup> The Grange of Gelynog.

<sup>2</sup> Now Newtown.

That the Grange of Gelynog, in the Parish of Tregynon, formed a part of the grant by Meredydd ap Rotpert is also highly probable. Mr. Morris, in his paper entitled “*Reliquiæ Monasticæ*”, in *Montgomeryshire Collections*, vol. ix, p. 306, states that “many years ago he saw in a book a statement made by one of the abbots of Strata Florida, that he demurred to a certain case, in which he was concerned, being heard in any other court than his own court in Cydwain”; he unfortunately at that time made no note for reference, but in the course of his antiquarian researches he subsequently came across some papers relating to a legal claim by Lord Tracy, who succeeded Arthur Blayney, Esquire, in the possession of the Gregynog estates, to the exclusive right of pasturage on Gelynog; among the schedule of documents relating to the case are the following :

“12th Henry VIII, 1520-21. A lease of the Grainge of Gelynoc from the Abbot of Strata Florida to Gryffth ap Howell ap Ieuan Blayney for ninety-nine years.”

In the “*Miscellanea Historica*” (*Mont. Coll.*, vol. ii, p. 366) the enrolment of this grant is thus mentioned, giving the name of the abbot, and the parishes in which Gelynock is situate :

“13th Henry VIII, 2 November 1521. Enrolment of a grant from Richard,<sup>1</sup> Abbot of the Monastery of the Blessed Mary of Strata Florida, of a grange called ‘Gelynnock’, with appurtenances in Gregynog and Haberhaves parishes, to Griffith ap Howel ap Ieuan Blayney, for ninety-nine years, at six shillings and eightpence rent.” (*Land Rev. Rolls*, N. W.)

The schedule continues as follows :

“17th Eliz. 1574-5. David Lloyd Blayney’s deed of purchase of the Grainge of Gelynnock.

“19th Eliz. 1576-7. An exemplification from the records of the Court of the Council of the Marches of Wales, of a lease of the Grainge of Gelynnock from the Abbot of Strata Florida to Griffith ap Howel ap Ieuan Blayney for ninety-nine years.”

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<sup>1</sup> Richard Talley.

“ A paper concerning the Grainge of Gelynog.

“ 1st Jac. I, 1603-4. An inquisition taken at Montgomery upon the death of Lewis Blayney.

[N.B. The Grainge of Gelynnock is mentioned among the premises].

“ 11 Jac. I, 1613-14. Conveyance from Blayney to Herbert of several tenements and, *inter alia*, the Grainge of Gelynnock (not executed).

“ 14 Jac., 1616-17. A lease from John Blayney of Gregynog to F. Francis of Tregunnon, of the tenement called Cwm-Gwern-y-wheed, with ye appurtenances, etc.; and lands called the Gorsty Bank, the Calves Close, the Long Meadows; also another parcel of meadow adjoining to the said close, called the three days Math of Hay, and two other closes adjoining to the Long Meadow, all parcel of the Grainge of Galunnog.

“ 18 Jac. I, 1620-21. The Award of Edward Price.

“ 11 Car. I, 1635-6. Lease for ninety-nine years from John Blayney to Richard Pryce of Aberbechan, of several tenements, and two in possession of Thomas and William Syer, being part of the Grainge of Galunog.

“ 14 Car. I, 1638-9. A lease of the Grainge of Galunog and Bulkekayhaydd to Arthur Blayney of Gregynnogg, from Mrs. Clotworthy, widow of Robert Blayney of Castle Blayney in Ireland.

“ 15 Car. I, 1639-40. Sir Piercy Herbert's lease of the Freeth of Tregunnon to J. Blayney, reciting north side of said Freeth to be bounded by meadow land, part of the Grainge of Gelynog.

“ 17 Car. I, 1641-2. Order of the Court of Wards relating to the Grainge of Gelynock.

“ 17 Car. II, 1665-6. A lease to Morris Syer from J. Blayney of parcel of the Gelynock Rushy Meadow, two upper meadows, two closes, Mountain Season.

“ 21 Car. II, 1669-70. Mortgage in fee from Edward Blayney of Gregynog and his estate in several parishes, and part of the Galunog Abbey Land belonging to Strata Florida, to Randolph Egerton of Betterley, Sir R. Ottley of Pitchford, and Ri. Scriven of Froddesley, for the consideration of £700.

“ 23 Car. II, 1671-72. Lease for six months from Randolph Egerton of Betterley, co. Stafford, Esq., Ri. Scriven of Froddesley, co. Salop, to Humph. Blunden of Worthen, co. of Salop; the estate of Edward Blayney, Esq., of Gregynog, and several parishes, etc.

“ N.B. Some parcels part of the Abbey Land Gelanog.

“ Interrogatories to be administered to witnesses in a cause



between Morgan and Blayney in the Court of Wards, concerning Gelynog.”

The only paper remaining of those scheduled above is the original lease from Mrs. Clotworthy to Arthur Blayney, and a certified copy of the same. The original is on parchment, and has a seal affixed; but there is no legible device or anything else upon the seal.

The following is a portion of the verbatim copy of the lease.

“Witnesseth that the said Elizabeth Clotworthy, for and in considerac'on of the rents hereafter reserved hath demised, leased, sett, and to farme lett, and by these presents doth demise, lease, set, and to farme let unto the said Arthur Blayney All that parcell of waste land which now lyeth uninclosed, commonly called or knowne by the name or names of Bulke y Kay haydd and yr hên Gelynog, being parte and parcell of the Grange and frythe of Gelynog, and which is meered and surrounded with a two faced ditch called the Abbot's Ditch, from the rest of the common there, and scituat, lyeing, and being in the Parish of Tregynon, and County of Mountgomery aforesaid, and with the saime meers and bounds as the premises were lately demised by John Blayney of Tregynon aforesaid, Esq., unto the said Robert Blayney, his brother, to have and to hold, etc.”

The rent reserved under this lease is £15 per annum, and it is clear that this was only a portion of the Grange of Gelynog demised by Abbot Richard Talley, in 1520-21, to Gryffith ap Howell ap Ieuan Blayney for the term of ninety-nine years, at the reserved rent of six shillings and eightpence.

Mr. Morris further remarks that “the Galynog, Gelynog, as it is variously spelt in the preceding documents, is situated in the upper part of the parish of Tregynon, and is marked on the Ordnance Survey ‘Celynog’. A line drawn from the village of Bettws Cydwain to Llyn Tarw, a lake on the Llanwnnog Hills, will intersect ‘Celynog’. From inquiries made by me recently (March 1876), I have ascertained there are remains of the Abbot's ditch yet existing.”

In the *Taxatio* of Pope Nicholas IV, 1291, “Spiri-

tual Beneficium in Dioc. Bangor, £16", relates to the Rectory of Llangurig, which is in that diocese. "*Temporal* Dioc. Assaven £2 9s.": this must refer to the Granges of Abermule and Gelynog in the diocese of St. Asaph. The remainder of the temporal estates of the abbey are described as in the Diocese of St. David's, in the Archdeaconries of Brecon, Cardigan, and Carmarthen; there is also an entry of Diocese of Bangor, of 6s. 8d. among the temporal possessions: could this refer to Gelynog? The parish of Tregynon is now in the deanery of Cydwain in the diocese of St. Asaph; the *Taxatio* values the property in Bangor at the very sum reserved in the lease in 1520-21.

In connection with the Montgomeryshire property belonging to the Abbey of Strata Florida, there are two interesting documents printed in the Appendix.<sup>1</sup> The first is "Chancery Inquisitione post mortem, 36 Henry III, No. 65 (10th February 1252)". The King in his writ commands Guy Rochfort, Bailiff of Montgomery, "by the oath of true and lawful men", to "diligently enquire how the Abbot of Strata Florida used the liberties contained in his charters, and which articles he used, and which he did not, in your bailiwick; and the Inquisition made thereupon, under your seal and the seals of those by whom it shall be made, you send to us without delay; and this writ." The inquisition is made at Montgomery on the 7th of May, 1252, and the persons before whom the inquiry is held, eleven in number, who with the bailiff, Guy Rochfort, would form a jury of twelve, make a return, and say "that the Abbot of Strata Florida and his men, in the time of the Lord Robert de Budlers, and in the time of Baldwin de Budlers, and in the time of William de Curtenay, have used all the liberties and articles contained in their charters. But after that the Lord the King constructed his castle of Montgomery, they did not use their liberties and articles contained in their charters." What were

<sup>1</sup> See Appendix, p. xxix.

the liberties contained in the charters which the abbot appears to have surrendered or not used after King Henry rebuilt the Castle of Montgomery, does not appear. The principal farm at Abermule is "The Court"; here, probably, the abbot exercised judicial functions over that part of the lordship of Cydwain which belonged to the monastery, and after the castle was built this liberty may have been withdrawn, as it would be inconvenient to have two authorities exercising "Jura Regalia" concurrently over the same district; or it may be, possibly, simply a matter of "freedom from toll, passage, and pontage", which King John in his charter had granted them. Montgomery being the principal market-town of the district in which the Grange of Abermule is situated, the abbot's tenants under the charter of John would be free of toll; whereas when the castle was built by Henry III and the town fortified, all persons entering for the purpose of business would be liable to the payment of toll.

The second document referred to is among the charters, etc., in the British Museum. Addit. MS. 4525, f. 92,<sup>1</sup> is a suit of the Abbot of Strata Florida against Edmund de Mortimer in the Court of King's Bench, 21 Edward I (Roll 216), Michaelmas 1293. The abbot complains that Mortimer "distrained and caused to distrain the same abbot, to compel him to come to his court at Keddenweyn (Cydwain), to the no small loss and hurt of the same", seeing that he is not within the jurisdiction of Mortimer, and that neither he nor "his predecessors have been accustomed to plead nor to be impleaded concerning lands, tenements, possessions, or other pleas before this time, except in the court of the Prince of Wales,"<sup>2</sup> by writs of the same prince or without writ, whose estate the lord King now hath." The abbot further complains that Edmund de Mortimer was the first who distrained

<sup>1</sup> See Appendix, p. xxxii.

<sup>2</sup> This plea of the Abbot's shows that Strata Florida had these possessions before Edward I granted Cydwain to Roger Mortimer.

or attempted to compel him to attend his court, and that his father, Roger de Mortimer, to whom the King had granted Cydewain by his charter of the 6th of January 1279, had claimed no such right. Edmund de Mortimer, on the other hand, asserts "that the abbot and his predecessors of Strata Florida have been hitherto accustomed to plead and to be impleaded in the court of Roger de Mortimer, his father, whose heir he is, concerning this manner of pleas."

The dispute appears to have been subsequently amicably settled by agreement between the parties to the suit, in manner following: "Afterwards, within five weeks of Easter, in the twenty-second year [Edward I, 1293], the aforesaid Edmund comes, and in like manner the aforesaid abbot, and they are agreed by permission, and the abbot gives twenty shillings for the permission of agreement. And the agreement is such that the aforesaid Edmund recognised and granted for himself and his heirs for ever, that neither the aforesaid abbot nor his successors may be impleaded by the same Edmund and his heir or any others whomsoever concerning their lands and tenements whatsoever within the demesne of Kedenweyn [Cydewain] now lying, unless by writ of the lord King and his heirs in the court of the same King, and his heirs. Saving, however, to the same Edmund and his heirs that they according to the custom of that country formerly in use should have recognisance of all manner of other pleas not touching lands and tenements concerning the aforesaid abbot and his successors as formerly he used to have. And the aforesaid abbot granted this same thing in the court here for himself and his successors for ever."

Before quitting the subject of the Montgomeryshire possessions of Strata Florida, it may be interesting to refer to an event which happened at Abermule in 1263, when the great barn of the Grange was destroyed, during the war then raging between Henry III and

Llewelyn ap Gruffydd. The *Brut y Tywysogion* (Rolls ed., p. 349) thus refers to this event :

“1263. The ensuing year, a little before Easter, John Strange the younger, who was then bailiff of Castle Baldwin [Montgomery], made a night attack with a vast force upon Ceri and Cydwain ; and after collecting immense spoil he returned back, down by way of Cydwain to the Tanad. And when the Welsh got information of this, they pursued them, and slew on that day, of the English, upwards of twelve hundred, including those on the fields and in the barn of Aber Miwl [Abermule]. And immediately after that, John Strange burned the barn on account of that slaughter ; and a little afterwards he killed the Welsh near Colunwy” [Clun].

The Monks' Barn at Abermule was no doubt a very large building ; we have still at Wigmore Abbey one of these large monastic barns in very perfect condition, in all probability the battle raged round the Grange of Abermule and in the fields surrounding it, in the fertile vale of the Severn ; and many of the English force were, according to the *Chronicle*, slain in the barn. The destruction of the barn would be a serious loss to the monastery, and consequently would be recorded in the annals. This is another proof that this *Chronicle* was kept at Strata Florida, for so common an incident as the destruction of a barn not belonging to the abbey would scarcely be noted at a time when war and devastation were rife in the country.

We have before referred to the remission by King Henry III of the debt which the monastery of Strata Florida owed to the Crown ; it is somewhat difficult to understand how so large a sum had accrued to the King ; the chronicle states that it was “in respect of a debt which the monastery owed for a long time previously” ; the King forgives half the debt, “namely fifty marks”. And then follows a sentence which it is not easy to comprehend—“and three hundred marks the other paid, and was to pay as much more, under

settled limitations, as may be found in the Register of the Monastery.”<sup>1</sup>

The *Chronicle* states that Gruffydd, Abbot of Strata Florida, made peace with King Henry in respect of this debt, in 1248; it may have been in the nature of a fine imposed for having harboured the King’s enemies in the time of King John, when he ordered Falkes de Breauté to destroy the abbey in 1212, and that the abbot purchased the safety of his monastery and exemption from destruction by consenting to the payment of this large fine. If this is not the true explanation of the origin of the debt it is difficult to say in what way it became due to the King.

The next event recorded in the *Brut y Tywysogion* is the death of another of the sons of Rhys ap Gruffydd, who died in 1251. “And in the end of that year Morgan, son of the Lord Rhys, died, after taking the religious habit at Strata Florida.”<sup>2</sup> If it be assumed that the meaning of this is that he was simply buried in a monk’s cowl, and that he did not actually die *at* Strata Florida, we may abandon the theory that from time to time those persons whose death *at* the abbey is recorded in the *Chronicle* were carried there when they fell sick to be treated by the monks; but it should be observed that where the *Chronicle* records the burials of persons who did not die *at* the abbey, the place where they died is generally mentioned.

In 1254 we have the record of the purchase and erection of the great bell of Strata Florida, which “was bought for three score and thirty-seven marks, and two kine, and consecrated by the Bishop of Bangor.”<sup>3</sup> In the notices of Strata Florida Abbey in vol. ii of the *Myfyrion Archæology*, p. 460, it is stated that it was bought for one hundred and nine marks.<sup>4</sup> The same

<sup>1</sup> *Brut y Tywysogion*, Rolls ed., p. 335.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 337. This son of Rhys ap Gruffydd witnesses the charter of his nephew, Maelgwn the younger, to Strata Florida Abbey.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 341.

<sup>4</sup> See Appendix, p. ii.

year Rhys the only son of Maelgwn the younger died, "after taking the habit of religion at Strata Florida, and there he was buried near his sister, in the chapter-house of the monks."<sup>1</sup> The death of Maelgwn's daughter, Gwenllian, in the previous year, has been already mentioned, and that she died at Llanfihangel Gelynrod.

The obituary for the year following also records the death of Margaret, another daughter of Maelgwn, and wife of Owain ap Meredydd ap Rotpert, Lord of Cydwain, who died on the Saturday next before the Feast of St. Michael (September 25, 1255), and was buried by the side of her brother, at Strata Florida.<sup>2</sup>

Maelgwn the younger died in 1257, and it is recorded that he was buried in the chapter-house of the monks at Strata Florida, but nothing is said about his "taking the habit of religion", or that he died at the abbey; the *Chronicle* simply records his death and burial; we have seen that both he and his father were benefactors to the monastery. He is said to have married Angharad, daughter of Prince Llewelyn ap Iorwerth, by his wife Joan, the illegitimate daughter of King John.<sup>3</sup> He was succeeded in his possessions by his grandson Llewelyn ap Rhys.<sup>4</sup>

During the continual wars that at this time raged between the Welsh and English, Meredydd ap Rhys, a grandson of Rhys ap Gruffydd and son of Rhys Gryg, espoused the cause of the English, and having made his peace with the King, and done homage for his lands, they were confirmed to him. The defection of Meredydd from the national cause was deeply resented by the other Welsh princes; Llewelyn ap Gruffydd and the lords of South Wales attacked his territory of Ystrad Towy, and reduced all his lands to subjection, with the exception of the castles. After which they

<sup>1</sup> *Brut y Tywysogion*, Rolls ed., p. 339.

<sup>2</sup> *Annales Cambrie*.

<sup>3</sup> *Her. Vis. Wales*, vol. ii, p. 99.

<sup>4</sup> *Inq. p. m.*, 7 Edw. I, No. 76.

attacked Kidwelly and burnt the town ; but here they were surprised by Lord Patrick de Chaworth and Meredydd ap Rhys, and an action took place in which several persons of importance on both sides were killed and wounded, Meredydd ap Rhys himself being wounded. Among those slain on the Welsh side was David ap Howel, a nobleman of Arwystli, who was honourably interred at Strata Florida in 1258.<sup>1</sup>

David ap Howel was in all probability descended from Howel ap Ieuav, Lord of Arwystli, who gave to Strata Florida the Vicarage of Llangurig, and being the descendant of a benefactor to the abbey, he would for that reason be buried there.

Owain ap Gruffydd, grandson of Prince Rhys ap Gruffydd, died on the 18th January 1235, and was succeeded by his son, Meredith ap Owain, who died in March 1265 ; and who, according to the *Brut y Tywysogion*, is described as “ Meredydd, son of Owain, son of Gruffydd, son of the Lord Rhys, the defender of all South Wales, and counsellor of all Wales, died at Llanbadarn the Great, and was buried in the chapter-house of the monks, at Strata Florida.”

From the accession of Llewelyn ap Gruffydd, as Prince of North Wales, Meredydd ap Owain had taken an active part with Llewelyn in asserting the cause of his country's freedom, and with him may be said to have ended the independence of his family. His country was finally subjugated during the succeeding reign of Edward I, and his sons and their issue either forfeited their estates for rebellion, or became vassals of the English Crown.<sup>2</sup>

By his wife Eleanor, daughter of Maelgwn the younger, he left three sons and one daughter ; the eldest son, Owain ap Meredydd, died 15th August 1275, and was buried near his father in the chapter-house at Strata Florida. Gruffydd, the second son,

<sup>1</sup> *Annales Cambrie.*

<sup>2</sup> *History of the Princes of South Wales.*



was taken prisoner in 1283, and imprisoned in the Tower of London. The third son, Conan, who granted a charter to Strata Florida Abbey, was also taken prisoner, confined in the Tower, subsequently released, and executed in 1295 at Hereford.

With reference to the charter of Conan ap Meredydd,<sup>1</sup> it will be observed that he confirms the donations of his father, the Lord Meredydd, son of Owain, and his brothers Owain and Gruffydd; and though his charter is not dated, we may assume from the wording that it was executed subsequent to the death of his father in 1265.

This charter is fully recited in the charter of 3rd Henry VI, 8th July 1426; it sets forth in very great detail and most minutely all the property then belonging to Strata Florida Abbey, which had been granted by Rhys ap Gruffydd or his descendants; and it more especially recites that there is given and granted "all and singular the goods which by shipwreck or tempest of the sea, the destruction of any ship or vessel whatsoever, or by wreck, or in any other manner or case whatsoever, to any lands whatsoever of the said monks shall come, or by misfortune fall, and chiefly in all the maritime lands of the same monks"; it further recites in most minute detail the various classes of goods that may be comprised under grant of wreckage, including wine, honey, beer, and other liquor whatsoever; corn of all kinds; fish, flesh, and other victuals; money of gold and silver; precious stones, rings, and jewels; and a variety of other commodities.

The charter also states that "all the lands and pastures of the said religious men" are given and granted to them free and quit; that "no other person, secular or ecclesiastic, at any time of the year, shall have any commoning in any of the lands, pastures, and woods of the same monks; nor at any time shall any one, as of custom, dare or presume to challenge, or demand to himself any common or vicinage in the said lands and

<sup>1</sup> See Appendix, page xvi.

pastures and woods, to the prejudice of the said religious men ; but the said religious men shall keep and hold all their lands, pastures, and woods to their own use, and without any challenge and demand shall peaceably possess the same."

We can see by the above that the country was becoming more settled and populous in the vicinity of the monastic estates, and that attempts had evidently been made to encroach upon the rights of the monks to their mountain pastures, by claims to rights of common thereon by the adjoining proprietors, and they took care that in this charter their rights should be very carefully and fully set forth.

Conan also gives to the monks liberty to make and construct a weir in the river Ystwith, where they have land on both sides of the river. The original charter of Rhys ap Gruffydd made the river Ystwith the boundary of his grant ; by this it is evident that subsequent donors had given them property on the north side of the Ystwith, and probably a large portion, if not the whole, of the present Hafod estate, now the property of Mr. Waddingham, may have been part of the possessions of Strata Florida, and comprised in their Granges of Havodwen and Cwmystwith.

This charter is subsequently confirmed in 1369 by Edward Prince of Wales, in the forty-third year of Edward III, and he grants to "Llewelyn, now Abbot of Strata Florida and the convent of the same place, that they and their successors for ever may have free warren in all their demesne lands in the counties of Cardigan and Carmarthen ; so, nevertheless, that the same lands be not within the metes of our forest, so that no one may enter the same lands to chase in the same, or to take anything which to warren belongs, without the license and will of the said abbot and convent or their successors, upon forfeiture to us of £10."

In 1282 the insurrection took place in Wales which

led to the death of Llewelyn ap Gruffydd at Cefny-bedd, near Builth, to the execution of his brother David, the extinction of the royal line of the princes of Gwynedd, and final conquest of Wales by Edward I. In this revolt, Rhys Vychan, son of Rhys ap Maelgwn, with his sons Gruffydd and Llewelyn, and the brothers Gruffydd and Conan ap Meredydd, joined.

King Edward received tidings of the insurrection at Devizes, and without a moment's delay sent off reinforcements to his troops on the Marches. On March 28<sup>1</sup> he wrote to the Archbishop of Canterbury, directing him to excommunicate the rebels, that the ban of the Church might encourage his soldiers and depress the spirits of their opponents. This the Archbishop deferred doing, and exerted himself to the utmost to induce Llewelyn ap Gruffydd to submit to the King, and for this purpose visited Llewelyn on November 3rd, 1282.

Llewelyn's answer to the articles which the Archbishop had delivered to him contains a repetition of former complaints against oppressive injustice and rapacity, and a renewed profession of willingness to be reconciled if native laws and customs were insured to his people. Further negotiations ensued, but with no satisfactory result, and finally the Archbishop, having utterly failed to reconcile the contending parties, excommunicated Llewelyn and all his abettors and aiders against the King's authority. In December 1282, Llewelyn led his army into Cardiganshire and ravaged all the English settlements there; on the 11th of December he was at Aberedw Castle on the banks of the Wye, a few miles below Builth; here he had arranged a conference with some of the chieftains of the neighbourhood who were disaffected towards the King, and was nearly surprised by the advance up the Valley of the Wye of a body of English troops, under Edmund de Mortimer and John Giffard. Llew-

<sup>1</sup> Rymer's *Fœdera*, ed. 1705, t. ii, pp. 188, 189.

elyn, who appears to have left the main body of his troops on the Epynt mountains, endeavoured to rejoin them, but was overtaken and slain in a small dell, still called Cwm Llewelyn, near Builth. His head was cut off and sent to King Edward at Rhuddlan, together with the regal signet and golden torque which he wore, also some documents which were found upon his body, compromising many important persons in Wales and the Marches. His head was fixed upon the Tower of London, encircled by an ivy wreath, and, according to Rymer, his body was, through the intercession of Maud de Longespee, the wife of John Giffard, and a kinswoman of the prince, removed from Cefn-y-bedd, where it was first buried, and reinterred with religious rites in the Cistercian Abbey of Cwmhir in Radnorshire.<sup>1</sup>

Prince David for a short time maintained a desultory war with King Edward, but gradually one after another of his strongholds passed into the King's hands, and in 1283, about June 24th, he was taken prisoner with his wife and family; and on the last day of September he was tried before the High Court of Parliament, assembled at Shrewsbury, convicted of treason, and sentenced to death.

The sentence was executed at Shrewsbury, and he was hanged, drawn, beheaded, and quartered, his dismembered frame distributed for exhibition in four English cities, his head being taken to London, and placed by the side of his brother's, over the lofty gateway of the Tower of London.

The capture of David led to the surrender and imprisonment of many chiefs of the insurrection, and among them were Gruffydd and Conan, sons of Meredydd ap Owain, and other descendants of Prince Rhys ap Gruffydd, who were for some time kept prisoners in the Tower of London.

After this, it would seem that Conan ap Meredydd once more obtained his liberty, and he may possibly

<sup>1</sup> *History of Wales*, by Miss Jane Williams, p. 417.

have had some portion of his lands restored to him. We hear nothing of him during the rebellion of Rhys ap Meredydd ap Rhys Grug from 1285 to 1291; but at the subsequent rising of the Welsh at Michaelmas, 1294, against the collection of the heavy war tax which the King had imposed upon them, Conan ap Meredydd and Maelgwn Vychan headed the insurrection in West Wales. These two chieftains, as representing the family of Prince Rhys ap Gruffydd, were the natural leaders of the men of West Wales. This insurrection was put down early in the following year; Maelgwn Vychan being killed near Carmarthen, and Conan ap Meredydd, being taken prisoner, was conveyed to Hereford, where he was hanged on September 14, 1295, having been first drawn to the place of execution at the tails of horses. Conan ap Meredydd is said to have left two daughters, one of whom married Geoffrey Clement, to whom the King had granted some part of Conan's forfeited estates.<sup>1</sup>

This Geoffrey Clement had a son Robert, who, on the death of his brother in 1319, succeeded to the lordship of Pennarth, and a moiety of Geneurglyn; in the Appendix, *page* xxxvii, will be found a petition (D) from the Abbot of Strata Florida, complaining that "There came one Robert Clement by colour of a charter which he had from our said lord the King, who is dead, on whom God have mercy, of the Commote of Pennarth, with the appurtenances, and demanded of the said abbot and his tenants cognizances of all pleas, and made many extortions and mischiefs upon the said tenants against the estates of our said lord the King and of his Crown, and to the great damage of the said abbot and of his house."

The date of this petition is probably some time in the reign of Edward II, and would be subsequent to the date of the death of Geoffrey, the elder brother of Robert Clement, in 1319.

There is a previous petition (C), also undated (*see*

<sup>1</sup> *History of the Princes of South Wales.*

Appendix, *page* xxxvi), in which the abbot makes a similar complaint against the constable of Cardigan.

In the confirmation charter of tenth year of King Edward III, dated 2nd October 1336, recited in the charter of 3rd Henry VI, this matter is very fully dealt with, and the King declares that the Abbot and Convent of Strata Florida, or their successors, or their men and tenants, shall not be forced to answer any pleas or complaints, except before the King's Justice of South Wales.

King Edward I, having now thoroughly conquered the Welsh, and his son Edward having been born at Carnarvon on April 25th, 1284, the King immediately after that event made a stately progress through the principality<sup>1</sup>; John Peckham, Archbishop of Canterbury, entering at the same time upon a visitation of the Welsh dioceses, for the purpose of arranging the ecclesiastical affairs of the country. Considerable sums of money were consequently paid by the King to various religious establishments in Wales, as compensation for the damage and spoliation they had suffered during the war, among these was the Abbey of Strata Florida. In the Appendix, *page* xlviii, will be found the receipts given for the compensation paid to the monastery, amounting to £78 sterling, and mentioning that it was "for the damages and oppressions inflicted upon our house in the time of the past war". The first receipt is dated at Chester, on the 3rd November 1284, when the money is paid to "brothers G. and I., proctors of the Lord Abbot and Convent of Strata Florida", and is subsequently acknowledged by the abbot in the same year, under the seal of the abbey. The abbot is described as brother A., probably Aman, who, as abbot, witnesses the charter of Conan ap Meredydd.

The Rev. G. Roberts, in his paper in vol. iii, *Archæologia Cambrensis*, p. 123, considers that this grant of £78 was to repair the damage and to assist in rebuild-

<sup>1</sup> *Annales Cambrie*, A.D. 1284; Rymer's *Fœdera*, ed. 1705, vol. ii, pp. 272, 273, 275-279, 287, 291, 292, 316, 317.

ing the edifice after the fire in 1295, when the abbey was burnt during the rebellion of Maelgwn Vychan and Conan ap Meredydd ; in this he is mistaken, as the first receipt is dated and the money was paid on the 3rd November 1284, and there is no reference in them to the destruction of the church by fire, which, according to the *Chronicle of St. Werburgh*, took place on the 13th December 1284. The *Chronicle* states as follows : “ 1284. In the same year, within twelve days of Christmas, a great misfortune happened to the Abbey of Strata Florida in Wales. The fire and lightning struck the belfry, and burned the whole of it, with the bells, without the flames being seen ; and then [the fire] devoured the whole church, which was completely covered with lead, as far as the walls, except the presbytery, which was seen to be miraculously preserved, inasmuch as the body of our Lord was kept there on the great altar under lock (as elsewhere is the case, according to universal custom). Whatever was there, except the walls of the church, was burned in that fire, including the choral books and bells. This happened in the night.”

During the progress of the excavations ample evidence was found confirming the truth of the statement in the monastic *Chronicle of St. Werburgh* as to the fire ; throughout the ruins pieces of lead were found which had been melted and trickled down from the roof into the interstices of the walls. In the presbytery and over the chapels were found fallen masses of the groined arches which had protected the interior of that portion of the church from the flames ; and underneath the later floors of encaustic and incised tiles were fragments of charred wood ; and in the north aisle was found the socket-hole of the upright of the wooden screen which divided it from the north transept, and fragments of the charred wood still remaining therein. In the presbytery was found a large mass of lead weighing several hundredweight, which had fallen with the groining, and had retained a cast of the back

of the groined arches into which it had trickled when melted by the fire that had destroyed the roof.

The date of the second fire which took place at Strata Flōrida is fixed by the reference thereto in the charter or license to rebuild the abbey of Edward I; according to Dugdale, this document was dated 28th Edward I, 30th March 1300, six years after the fire, and it expressly states that the abbey "was lately burnt in the Welsh war, in the twenty-third year of our reign (1294-5), contrary to our wishes"; and it gives permission to the abbot and convent that "they may construct afresh, and rebuild their house, and dwell there for the continual service of Almighty God; provided that the thickets be cut down, and the roads be mended, in the neighbourhood of the place aforesaid, under the direction of our Justiciary of West Wales, for the purpose of avoiding the dangers which may hereafter happen by means of those woods and the hazards of those roads."

In Wharton's *Anglia Sacra*, tom. i, p. 516, in the *Chronicle*, an. 1295, the following passage occurs: "Abbas de Stratflur stulte promisit Regi quod certo die et loco Comitatum de Cardigan adduceret ad pacem Regis, sed rege cum exercitu armato diutissime expectante, ibidem de Wallensibus nullus venit. Ideo iratus dixite, 'Accendite, accendite', et sic ignis, qui nunquam dicit, 'Sufficit,' similiter Abbatiam, et patriam involvebat." ("The Abbot of Strata Florida foolishly promised the King, that on a certain day and at a certain place, he would bring the county of Cardigan into amity with the King; but when the King with an armed force was waiting for a long time, no one of the Welshmen came to the appointed spot. Therefore the King said in a passion: 'Burn, burn'; and so the fire which never cries out 'Enough', in like manner wrapped both the abbey and the country in a flame".)

The fire took place during the insurrection of Maelgwn Vychan and Conan ap Meredydd, before referred



to, when the Welsh rebelled on account of the King's attempt to levy a fifteenth in Wales, as he had done two years before in England. In his license to rebuild the abbey, it will be observed that the King attributes this fire to his forces contrary to his wish. It does not follow that the fire extended to the church. The insurgents may well have occupied part of the monastic buildings, and the royal forces may have set fire to them in order to dislodge the insurgents.

There is a tradition in the district that it was by King Edward's orders that the abbey was burnt down ; and the place is still pointed out, on the high ground overlooking the abbey, at Bwlch-rhyd-y-meirch, or the Pass of the War Horses, where it is said the King halted his army, and waited for the abbot to come, according to his promise, with the principal men of Cardiganshire, to make their submission. The abbot failing to fulfil his promise, probably unable to do so, the King was so incensed that he gave orders for the destruction of the monastery by fire.

During the ten years that had intervened between the first accidental fire which had destroyed the church and the burning of the monastic buildings by Edward's troops, it is more than probable that the former had been restored, but not equal to its previous magnificence ; the roof was covered with common stone tiles from the slate rock of the district instead of lead, the painted walls were whitewashed, the carved stone work was not restored, and the stained glass with which the windows had been filled was in all probability never replaced. The bells were probably recast ; but we read no more of the great bell of Strata Florida ; and though at the dissolution of the monastery there is a mention of belfry and bells, they do not seem to have been of sufficient importance to require any special notice or valuation of them, as would have been the case if they had been large and valuable. Leland, in his *Itinerary*, mentions the decay of woods in Wales, and it was no doubt to be attri-

buted mainly to the devastation committed upon the woods and forests by Edward I and his predecessors on the English throne, as a matter of policy. He would not even permit Strata Florida to be rebuilt after the fire, without imposing, as a condition, that the abbot and convent should take care to have the thickets cut down and the highways mended. The King found the woods by experience to be so favourable to the enemy, both for attack and defence, that "in order to prevent any more rebellious attempts of the Welsh, he cut down all the woods in Wales, wherein in any time of danger they were wont to hide and save themselves."

This appears to have been a matter which the King had always considered of importance, for we find that in 1278 Rhys ap Meredydd has orders from the King to enlarge the roads through his woods between Caermarthen and Brecon; at the same time similar orders are issued to Gruffydd and Conan, sons of Meredydd, the Abbot of Talley, the Abbot of Strata Florida, and others.<sup>1</sup> Again, in 1280, the King's Justiciary of West Wales received the following instructions from the King with respect to the woods within his jurisdiction; "Since we are given to understand that it is expedient, for the preservation of the peace in West Wales, and for the safety of travellers, that the thick coverts in the woods of Rhys ap Meredydd, Gruffydd ap Meredydd, Conan ap Meredydd, Llewelyn ap Owain, the Abbot of Strata Florida, and the Abbot of Alba Land [Whitland], where robberies, homicides, and other enormities against the King's peace have been wont to be committed, should be cut down and assarted, we have ordered each of them to cause their woods to be cut down and assarted in such places as you shall point out to them under your supervision, and according to your directions; and we hereby require you to give sufficient notice to each of them, and to see

<sup>1</sup> *Rot. Wall.*, 6-9 Edw. I, m. 12, dorso de ao. sexto.

that our orders are carried out by them without delay.”<sup>1</sup>

The last entry in the *Brut y Tywysogion* that refers to Strata Florida is in 1280; it records the death of Richard de Carew, Bishop of St. David's; the consecration of his successor, Thomas Beck; it also mentions, “That year [1280] died Philip the Red, the thirteenth Abbot of Strata Florida; and after him Einon the Saxon became abbot, and in his lifetime the monastery was burned. After that [the election of Abbot Einon], on the eve of the feast of Candlemas [February 1st], the Bishop of Menevia sang Mass in Strata Florida, and that was the first Mass that he sang in the diocese; and on the feast of St. David [March 1st] ensuing he sat in the chair in the church of Menevia.”<sup>2</sup>

This entry has been interpreted to mean that this was the first Mass *sung* in the diocese, but the Rolls edition clearly puts it that it was the first Mass sung by Bishop Beck on his appointment to the diocese of St. David's, A.D. 1280.

The Rev. Canon Bevan, in his *History of the Diocese of St. David's*, refers to the evils which sprang up in connection with the appropriation of parochial benefices to the support of the monasteries, and we have an illustration of what he says upon this subject in a dispute which arose in 1339, as to tithes, between the Abbey of Strata Florida and the incumbents of eleven parishes in which the abbey possessed estates. Bishop Gower of St. David's<sup>3</sup> entered into an agreement (*see* Appendix, p. 1) with the Abbot of Strata Florida to the effect that the incumbent of the parishes named therein should receive from the tenants of the monastery two-thirds of the great tithes, and the whole of the lesser tithes and oblations, the remaining third of

<sup>1</sup> *Rot. Wall.*, de ao. octavo, Edw. I.

<sup>2</sup> *Brut y Tywysogion*, Rolls ed., p. 373.

<sup>3</sup> Henry Gower was Bishop of St. David's from A.D. 1328 to A.D. 1347.

the great tithes being left for the monastery ; but it is added, “if any go to worship at the monastery and its two chapels of St. Paulinus and St. Madoc, the oblations are to go to the monastery”; and in those days when others were bound to make oblations in the parish churches as parishioners, the tenants of the said monastery were likewise obliged to offer in them, in return for which the parochial clergy were bound to administer the sacraments to all who dwelt within the precincts of the monastery. The two chapels mentioned in the agreement, St. Paulinus and St. Madoc, were situated, the former at Capel Ystradffin in Carmarthenshire, on the banks of the river Towy ; and the latter in the parish of Llanſaintffraid Cwmdauddwr in Radnorshire, on the banks of the river Elan, upon a farm called Llanfadog, where there are still some mounds which mark its site.

From the death of Llewelyn ap Gruffydd, Prince of Gwynedd, in 1282, until Owain Glendower’s rebellion in 1400, the general condition of Wales throughout this interval was decidedly improved, as compared with the former period. After a few isolated and ineffectual insurrections, the people exchanged the spear for the ploughshare, and settled down to the arts of peace. But the national spirit was curbed rather than broken, and hopes were still entertained of a recovery of national independence. These aspirations found vent in the insurrection headed by Owain Glendower.<sup>1</sup>

During this comparatively peaceful interval, the Abbey of Strata Florida appears to have recovered the losses and made good the damages inflicted upon it in the wars of Edward I. From time to time, as we have seen, they had disputes to settle with the neighbouring landowners who had succeeded to the forfeited estates of the family of Prince Rhys ap Gruffydd, but these disputes were settled by reference to the courts

<sup>1</sup> *History of the Diocese of St. David’s*, by the Rev. Canon Bevan.

of law, and not by fire and sword. From time to time, as each succeeding monarch of England ascended the throne, they applied for and obtained confirmation grants of their charters, and the inmates of the monastery appear to have pursued the even tenor of their way until Owain Glendower, driven to rebellion by oppression and injustice, once more roused the martial spirit of the Welsh nation.

Owain Glendower was a Welsh gentleman of noble birth, descended on his mother's side from Llewelyn ap Gruffydd, last Prince of North Wales, and also claiming descent in the female line from Prince Rhys ap Gruffydd.

He appears to have been educated at an English university, and subsequently was a student of the Inns of Court. Some unrecorded incident having changed the direction of his career, he became "esquire of the body" to King Richard II. Owain was captured with Richard in Flint Castle, and when the King was consigned to prison, he retired to his home at Sycharth in North Wales.

King Richard II having resigned his Crown on the 29th September 1399, his cousin, Henry Plantagenet, became King of England, and before the close of that year created his eldest son, Henry of Monmouth, Prince of Wales.

Owain Glendower had a lawsuit with his neighbour, Reginald Lord Grey de Ruthyn, as to the ownership of a tract of common land called Croesau, which was decided in his favour, but he did not long enjoy its undisturbed possession. Lord Grey was a partisan of Henry Plantagenet, and, emboldened by his accession to the throne as Henry IV, took forcible possession of the Croesau in the year 1399. Owain laid his case before Parliament, but could obtain no redress, and his suit was dismissed.

A writ summoning Owain, as a feudal Baron of the British Crown, to attend King Henry in his expedition against Scotland, was entrusted for delivery to his

avowed enemy, Reginald de Grey, who purposely delayed it until the time for obedience had passed. Nevertheless, Reginald de Grey and other political adversaries of Owain contrived so to misrepresent the facts of the case as to deduce the inference that the Welsh chieftain was guilty of high treason. The subject was debated in Parliament, and John Trevor, Bishop of St. Asaph, not only exonerated him from blame, but warmly remonstrated against the impolicy of provoking a man of his character and of his influence with the Welsh people. The majority of the English nobles answered the eloquent prelate with the contemptuous assertion "that they were not afraid of those barefooted scrubs"; and Reginald de Grey was consequently authorised to seize upon Owain's whole estate under the pretext of forfeiture for high treason.<sup>1</sup>

Owain Glendower did not quietly await the execution of this decree; he summoned his retainers and friends to his aid, and attacked Lord Grey, sacked his town of Ruthin in Denbighshire, and forcibly recovered possession of the lands of which he had been dispossessed. He then proceeded through North Wales and its marches, taking possession of many castles and strongholds.

On the 8th November 1400, King Henry IV granted to his brother, John Earl of Somerset, all the manors, lands, and tenements in North and South Wales which were forfeited to the King by the high treason of Owain Glendower.<sup>2</sup>

The English Parliament, which met in January 1401, passed a series of most oppressive and cruel ordinances ever enacted against any people; prohibiting the Welsh from purchasing lands, from holding any corporate office, and from bearing arms within any city, borough, or market town; ordering that in lawsuits between an Englishman and a Welshman, the former should be convicted only by the judgment of English justices, or

<sup>1</sup> *History of Wales*, by Miss Jane Williams, pp. 435-438.

<sup>2</sup> *Rot. Parl.*, vol. iv, p. 440.

the verdict of all the English burgesses, or by inquests of English boroughs and towns of the lordships in which the respective suits lay; disfranchising all English burgesses who were married to Welshwomen; and forbidding Welshmen to assemble together for conference without license from the local authorities, and in their presence. No provisions or arms were to be received into Wales without special permission from the King or his council. No Welshman was to have the charge of any castle, fortress, or place of defence, even though he might be its owner, nor to execute the offices of lieutenant, justice, chancellor, treasurer, chamberlain, sheriff, steward, coroner, or any other office of trust, notwithstanding any patent or license to the contrary. These tyrannous statutes likewise forbade Welshmen to bring up their children as scholars, or to apprentice them to any occupation within any town or borough of the realm.<sup>1</sup>

The result of these vindictive enactments would seem to have strengthened the hands of Owain Glendower; crowds of Welsh craftsmen, labourers, and military retainers were obliged to return from England to their own country to swell the ranks of the disaffected.

Owain took up a strong position on Plynlimmon, at a place called Mynydd Hyddgant, and from thence sent forth predatory expeditions against the English settlers, and against such Welsh chieftains as refused to aid his cause.

The county of Montgomery suffered much from these expeditions. Owain sacked Montgomery, burned the suburbs of Welshpool, and ravaged many estates. He also destroyed the Abbey of Cwmhir, took the castle of Radnor, and caused the garrison of sixty men to be beheaded on the brink of the castle yard.

In the autumn of this year, 1401, King Henry appears to have entered Wales<sup>2</sup> with an army, and

<sup>1</sup> *History of Wales*, by Miss Jane Williams, pp. 439-440.

<sup>2</sup> Rymer's *Fœdera*, ed. 1709, vol. viii, pp. 225, 226.

lingered there for some weeks, proclaiming Owain a rebel, desecrating and pillaging the Abbey of Strata Florida, ravaging the country, and then finding his troops exhausted by fatigue and famine, making with them a disgraceful retreat, baffled and worsted.

The *Chronicle of Adam of Usk* gives an exceedingly graphic account of this event, as follows :

“ In this autumn Owen Glendower, all North Wales and Cardigan and Powis siding with him, sorely harried with fire and sword the English who dwelt in those parts, and their towns, and especially the town of Pool. Wherefore the English invading those parts with a strong power, and utterly laying them waste and ravaging them with fire, hunger, and sword, left them a desert, not even sparing children or churches, nor the monastery of Strata Florida, wherein the King himself was a guest: the church of which and its choir, even up to the high altar, they used as a stable, and pillaged even the patens; and they carried away into England more than a thousand children of both sexes, to be their servants. Yet did the same Owen do no small hurt to the English, slaying many of them, and carrying off the arms, horses, and tents of the King's eldest son, the Prince of Wales, and of other lords, which he bare away for his own behoof to the mountain fastnesses of Snowden.” (*Chronicle of Adam de Usk*, p. 191.)

The occupation of the abbey by the troops of Henry IV may even now be traced in the shattered condition of such of the encaustic and incised tile pavements as are left; in many places these have been repaired in an irregular manner, breaking up the original design; and it is not at all improbable that very great damage was done to the pavements at that time, when the church was used as a barracks and stable.

In the Appendix will be found transcripts of the Patent Rolls, 3 Henry IV, 1402, referring to this subject. In the first of these documents, dated 1st April, the King takes the abbey into his own hand, and commits the custody of it, and its lands, etc., to Thomas de Percy, Earl of Worcester, and John Belyng, clerk, to dispose thereof to the abbey's best advantage



and for its relief; stating as a reason for so doing that, owing to the frequent aggressions of Welsh rebels, and also raids of the King's lieges for the castigation of the same rebels, it is greatly impoverished and its lands devastated, so that the dispersion of the abbot and monks is feared. It further provides that all issues are to be devoted to the support of the abbots and monks for the succour and relief of the said place; and until this is effected, all annuities, pensions, etc., are to cease; none of its corn, cattle, etc., to be taken by purveyors for the household of the King or of the Prince of Wales. (*See Appendix, p. lv.*)

Despite of this provision for securing the abbey from damage, we find that it was used as a place of arms and as a barracks for 120 men-at-arms and 360 archers, under the command of Henry Prince of Wales, up to the 9th Hen. IV, 16th November 1407, and it was the headquarters of that portion of the King's forces employed in quelling Owen Glendower's rebellion in the Marches of South Wales. (*See Appendix, Pat. Roll, 3 Hen. IV; Issue Roll (Rolls), 9 Hen. IV.*)

In 1402 the Welsh insurrection had reached its greatest force, and Owen Glendower succeeded in taking prisoner his most active opponent, Lord Grey de Ruthyn, for whose ransom he demanded the sum of 10,000 marks; 6,000 to be paid on the next St. Martin's Day, and hostages being given for the remaining 4,000. Future neutrality seems to have been a condition agreed upon, for Lord Grey never again took arms against Owain, and was never afterwards molested by him.<sup>1</sup>

Early in 1402 the Prince of Wales (afterwards King Henry V) was at Shrewsbury, from whence he wrote a letter to the Privy Council, giving an account of his operations against the rebels; and as an illus-

<sup>1</sup> *History of Wales*, by Miss Jane Williams, pp. 442-443.

tration of the kind of warfare carried on between the rival parties it is here given :

“Very dear and entirely well beloved, we greet you earnestly with our entire heart, thanking you very dearly for the good care which you have had of the businesses which concern us in our absence, and we pray you very affectionately for your good and friendly continuance, as our trust is in you. And for news in this part, if you will know, among others we were lately informed that Oweyn de Glyndourdy assembled his forces of other rebels, his adherents, in great number, purposing to make an incursion, and to fight if the English would resist him in his purpose, and so he boasted to his people. Wherefore we took our forces and went to a place of the said Oweyn well built, which was his principal mansion called Saghern (Sycharth), where we expected to have found him, if he had will to fight in manner as he said; and at our coming thither we found nobody, and therefore we caused the whole place to be burnt, and several other houses thereabouts of his tenants. And then we went straight to his other place of Glendourdy, to seek him there, and there we burnt a fair lodge in his park, and all the country thereabout. And we lodged ourselves by there all that night; and certain of our people sallied forth there into the country, and took a great gentleman of the country who was one of the said Oweyn’s chieftains, who offered £500 for his ransom to have had his life, and to have paid the sum within two weeks; nevertheless it was not accepted, but he was put to death, as well as divers others of his companions who were taken in the expedition. And then we went into the Commote of Edeyrnion, in the county of Merionyth, and there we ravaged with fire a fair country and well inhabited. And thence we went into Powys, and there being a scarcity of provender for horses in Wales, we caused our men to carry oats with them, and we remained . . . days. And to inform you more fully of this expedition, and of all other news here at present, we send to you our very dear esquire, John de Waterton, to whom you will be pleased to give entire faith and credence in what he shall report to you from us touching the news above mentioned. And may our Lord have you always in His holy keeping. Given under our signet, at Shrouesbury, this 15th day of May.”

The subsequent career of Owain Glendower is a matter of general history, and, therefore, beyond the scope of this work; he maintained his independence to the last, and on July 5th, 1415, Henry V, being then

at Porchester Castle, deputed Sir Gilbert Talbot to negotiate with him, even to the extent of promising pardon to him and his adherents, provided they would condescend to ask for it. On September 21st, in the same year, Owain died at the house of his youngest daughter, who had married Roger Monnington of Monnington in Herefordshire, and his tombstone is still pointed out in the churchyard there.

Up to the very last year of Owain Glendower's life there was a garrison kept at Strata Florida Abbey; for, in the minutes of the council of King Henry V held at the monastery of the Friars Preachers in London, 2nd February 1415, there is an order that forty men-at-arms and eighty archers shall be placed at Strata Florida, "for the safe ward of the parts of Wales", during the King's first expedition to France. How long they were subsequently retained there we do not know, or when the abbey ceased to be a fortified place of observation upon that part of Wales; several relics turned up during the excavations, which may have been mementoes of the occupation of the abbey as a military post, consisting of three spurs and a part of a set of manacles. The spurs are of early fifteenth century pattern, and may have been lost by some of the men-at-arms; one had been broken and apparently rudely repaired by the local blacksmith.

Strata Florida Abbey never thoroughly recovered the devastation inflicted upon it in the rebellion of Owain Glendower; for Leland, in his *Itinerary*, mentions that in his time, before the suppression of the monastery, the fraternity and infirmary were mere ruins.

In the Appendix, pages xxxix to xlvii, are two original documents relating to Strata Florida Abbey, which have not before been published, marked (E) and (F); they relate to a dispute which arose between William Morys, Abbot of Strata Florida, and John ap Rees, Abbot of Conwy, or Kymer [Cymmer], as to the right of succession to the Abbacy of Strata Florida.

Neither of these documents are dated, and it seems somewhat difficult to understand that the Parliamentary petition (E) refers to the subject of the letters patent (F), inasmuch, that in the former, John, Abbot of Strata Florida, is the petitioner against John ap Rees, Abbot of Conwy in the 6th year of the reign of a King whose name is not mentioned; in the letters patent it is William Morys, Abbot of Strata Florida, against John ap Res, then Abbot of Kymer, and the date is the 3rd March in the 21st year of the reign of King Henry.

Among the names to whom the letters patent are addressed is that of James Lord Audeley; he was Chamberlain of South Wales in the 21st year of Henry VI (1442-3), and in this year there was addressed to him a command to arrest a certain "Owen, son of Goronwy."<sup>1</sup>

John Stanley, the second name on the patent, was in the 2nd year of Henry V Constable of Carnarvon, and in the 5th of Henry VI Justice of Chester; he died before the 11th Edward IV, in which year was held an *inquisition post mortem* of his estates.

There was a Meredith ap Oweyn, who was appointed a collector of a subsidy in Wales in 1441 and 1449.<sup>2</sup>

This seems to fix the date of the documents marked E and F as the 6th and 21st Henry VI; they are also in French; if they had been of the reign of Henry III they would almost certainly have been in Latin.

In 1441 the heads of several of the principal Cistercian Houses in the kingdom, of whom the Abbot of Margam was the only Welsh abbot, received instructions from Cîteaux to inquire into certain abuses, which it was alleged had made their appearance in the Cistercian order in England and Wales; and to enable them to assemble for the purpose of conference, they petitioned the King to grant his letters patent to allow them to meet at Northampton, and it is not im-

<sup>1</sup> Acts of Privy Council, 14th March, 21 Hen. VI, 1443.

<sup>2</sup> Recog. Rolls of the Palatinate of Chester *in an.*

probable that one of the matters that was referred to them from Cîteaux was this very dispute as to the Abbacy of Strata Florida.<sup>1</sup>

The long period of fifteen years that intervened between the date of the petition in the sixth year of Henry VI (1427-8) and the twenty-first year of his reign, 1442-3, would lead us to assume that John ap Rees was Abbot of Conwy in 1427-8, when he first laid claim to, and ousted John, Abbot of Strata Florida. He does not appear to have been able to retain his position, for in 1442-3, when William Morys is appointed abbot, he seems to have again forcibly possessed himself of the abbey, and imprisoned his rival in Aberystwith Castle.

The letters patent state that the "abbey being lately vacant by the death of a certain Res, late abbot"; and that William Morys was "canonically elected and created by the prior and convent of the said place to be abbot and pastor thereof, and by a certain David, Abbot of Whitland, father abbot of the said Abbey of Strata Florida, and a certain John ap Res, then Abbot of Kymer, with observance of the Cistercian order, therein installed." The expression, "father abbot of Strata Florida", would seem to imply that Strata Florida was "a daughter of Whitland", as in the case of Caerleon, previously mentioned, which is described as "a daughter of Strata Florida", and if this is so, we have here a clue from whence the original convent of Strata Florida came.

It is possible that John ap Res may have been transferred from Conwy to Cymmer in the interim between 1427-8 and 1442-3, and this may account for the discrepancy between the petition and letters patent in this respect; however that may be, he seems to have considered he was entitled to the Abbacy of Strata Florida in 1427-8, and renewed his claim in 1442-3. What was the final result of the litigation we do not know; probably a further search amid the mass of

<sup>1</sup> Cott. Cleop., E. III, fo. 81.

documents at the Record Office may enable some future historian to clear up this matter, and settle which of the two litigants eventually had quiet possession of the dignified post of Lord Abbot of Strata Florida.

In the third year of the reign of Henry VI, 1426, the abbot and monks of Strata Florida obtained a confirmatory charter, which recites most fully all the previous charters that had been granted by his predecessors on the throne of England, and by Prince Rhys ap Gruffydd and his descendants. This charter is printed in full in the Appendix, from a translation made from an examined office copy in the possession of the late James Davies, Esq., of Moorcourt, in the county of Hereford, by the Rev. J. W. Rees, rector of Cascob, in the county of Radnor, July 13, 1833.

The spelling in this translation, both of names and places, is so erroneous as to render their proper signification, in many cases, almost unintelligible, and the intended list mentioned on page 108 has therefore been abandoned. In the task of correcting the orthography of the charters, I have been much aided by Mr. Edward Owen of the India Office, and Mr. E. R. Morris, late of Homestay, Newtown, Montgomeryshire; and to both these gentlemen I am indebted for most valuable aid and assistance in searching for and transcribing original documents relating to Strata Florida which have not before been published.

The charter of Henry VI was followed by another in the twenty-third year of the reign of Henry VII,<sup>1</sup> which is an equally long document, and again recites all preceding charters. It has not been thought necessary to reproduce the whole of this in the Appendix; but it will be seen by the part that has been printed, that so late as 1508 the abbot and

<sup>1</sup> In Dugdale's *Monasticon* this charter is described as 23rd of Hen. VI, and the error has been repeated by subsequent authors, including Tanner in his *Notitia Monastica*.

monks of Strata Florida were careful to secure a good title to their landed estates and possessions, of which in the subsequent reign they were to be deprived entirely, upon the final suppression of the monastery.

Two documents that are printed in the Appendix throw a little light upon occurrences that took place at Strata Florida Abbey in 1534, just before the Act of Parliament was passed in the year 1536 for the suppression of the lesser monasteries, in which category Strata Florida was included. The first of these is an examination, before the King's Commissioners, in the Marches of Wales at Shrewsbury, on the 1st October 1534, of two persons charged with the crime of coining spurious money at the abbey, one of them being a monk. At this period "clipping coin" and coining spurious money was a prevalent offence; and to so great an extent was coining carried, that a commission was appointed to investigate the matter.

The depositions shed a glimmer of light upon the life of the monks of Strata Florida. At that period it is quite clear that there was a public-house for the sale of beer, if not within the abbey precincts, at any rate not far away, kept by one John ap Dyo (David); and that there, on the Saturday before Midsummer Day in 1534, the weather doubtless being warm, Dan<sup>1</sup> Richard Smith, a monk, with Evan ap Howel, a weaver of Talgarth, and one Llewelyn ap Howel ap Jenkin, "did consume a pot of ale or two", for which the monk paid; after which they go into the abbey church, and there the weaver suggests to the monk that he knows a method whereby, if he is "an honest man", he can make him richer by forty shillings—which would be a good round sum in those days; and they adjourn to the monk's chamber to discuss the matter. The weaver then explains to the monk that it shall cost him nothing but a pot of ale to see how he can cast a groat; a fire is lighted, and a tin spoon procured, which they melt in an iron pot. The casting does not

<sup>1</sup> A title commonly given to monks at that period.

turn out a success, so they throw it through the window with the moulds; and brother Thomas Dyrham, another monk, who is walking by the window, picks up the spurious coin and carries it to the abbot, who comes and takes the two delinquents "in flagrante delicto", arrests both, and places them in irons.

The story, as told by each of the prisoners in the depositions, varies considerably, and the monk makes out that he was a much injured individual.

The examinations taken before the King's commissioners are very interesting, as they give the names of several of the monks at Strata Florida at that time, and who had pensions at the dissolution of the monastery: these are Richard Smith, Thomas Durham, and Morgan ap John. It would, therefore, appear that brother Richard Smith was acquitted of any complicity in the coining transaction, and returned to the abbey, eventually receiving a pension of £3 per annum when the monastery was dissolved. What became of the weaver we know not, but in all probability he was hanged at Shrewsbury.

The last Abbot of Strata Florida was Richard Talley; it was he who arrested the coiner, and is referred to in a letter of Rowland Lee, Bishop of Lichfield and Coventry, addressed to Cromwell, Secretary of State to King Henry VIII, dated 16th October 1534.<sup>1</sup> This letter refers to some dispute that had taken place at the monastery between the abbot and one of the monks, as the bishop, who was President of the Council of the Marches of Wales, informs Cromwell, that, in accordance with his directions, he had put the abbot in quiet possession, and sworn "his adversary the monk of the house there to his obedience". Richard Talley was abbot in 1520-21, when he granted a lease of the Grange of Gelynog to Gryffith ap Howell ap Ieuan Blayney (see *ante*, p. 137), and he obtained a pension of £40 per annum on the dissolution of the monastery.

<sup>1</sup> See Appendix.



In 1536, Parliament granted to Henry VIII the power to deal with the possessions of every religious house the income of which did not exceed £200 a year, and created a "Court of Augmentations", which was established to deal with all lands and moveables coming into the King's possession through the suppression or surrender of religious houses. The officers of the "Court of Augmentations" were to receive and account to the King for all rents, tithes, or proceeds of sales; to examine all leases, to take all surrenders, and issue all grants, gifts, or releases at their discretion; provided that in all grants "there should always be reserved to the King's highness, his heirs and successors, a tenure by knight's service *in capite*, and a yearly rent of the tenth part." One singular reservation is made by the Act, by which it is made clear that Henry had in contemplation the refoundation or preservation of such monasteries as he willed to keep. "Except always are reserved", runs the Act, "such and as many of the same monasteries, priories, and houses, with all their hereditaments, goods, and chattels, which the King's majesty by his letters patent, and under his great seal, shall declare and limit to continue and be in their essential estate, and to persevere in the body and corporation as they were before the making of the said Act."

I am indebted to a most interesting book recently published, entitled *Henry VIII and the English Monasteries*, by the Rev. F. A. Gasquet, for the foregoing facts, and the following remarks upon the dissolution of the lesser monasteries.

The author states the mode of procedure adopted upon the dissolution of a monastery, and no doubt it was similar in the case of Strata Florida; but, unfortunately, no report has yet been found in the Record Office of the proceedings of the commissioners appointed to carry out the Act of Dissolution at this abbey.

It appears that for this purpose a Royal Commission was issued to some of the leading men in each county,

to make a new survey of the houses within their appointed districts. They were to form a body of six visitors, comprising an auditor, the particular receiver appointed for the county, and a clerk, who were the royal officials, and who were to be accompanied by "three other discreet persons to be named by the King in every county". On their arrival at each monastery, they were ordered to summon the superior and show him the "Act of Dissolution" and their special commission. Next they were to make the officials of the house swear to answer truly the questions they put to them. Having done this, they had to proceed on their examination into the state of the establishment, and in their report to give the result of their inquiry.

They were specially directed to state the number of the religious "and the conversation of their lives"; how many were priests and how many were willing to go to other houses or would take "capacities", and what servants or other dependents were attached to the establishment. Having obtained this information, the Royal Commissioners were to call for the convent seal and all muniments of the house, and to make an inventory "by indenture" with the superior, of all plate, jewels, and other goods and property which belonged to the establishment on the 1st March of this year, 1536. They were then to issue their commands to the superior not to receive any rents nor spend any money, except for the necessary expenses of the place, until the King's final pleasure was known, at the same time enjoining him to continue to watch over the lands, and "sow and till" as before, till such time as the King's farmer should relieve him of his duty. As for the community, the officer was "to send those that will remain in the religion to other houses, with letters to the governors, and those that wish to go to the world to my lord of Canterbury and the lord chancellor for "capacities". To the latter "some reasonable reward", according to the distance of the place ap-

pointed, was to be given. The superior alone was to have any pension assigned to him, and he was to go to the Chancellor of the Augmentations for it.<sup>1</sup>

The Rev. F. A. Gasquet also mentions one other curious fact about the dissolution of the smaller monasteries, which happens to be peculiarly appropriate to Strata Florida, as it comes in the category of those monastic establishments of which no sooner had the King obtained possession than he commenced to re-found in perpetuity under a new charter.

In this way no fewer than fifty-two religious houses in various parts of England and Wales gained a temporary respite from extinction, and among these were Strata Florida and Whitland. The cost, however, was considerable to themselves. Strata Florida paid £66 13s. 4*d.* and Whitland £400 for the privilege.

In the Appendix will be found the documents relating to the suppression of the abbey; and in the letters patent re-founding it in perpetuity we have a list of all the possessions of Strata Florida at that time, and which were subsequently dealt with under various grants and leases upon the final dissolution of the monastery, which probably took place in the 31st year of Henry VIII, 1539-40.

In that year we find grants of pensions are made to the abbot. Richard Talley, and six monks, and in the 33rd year of Henry VIII, 1541 to 1542, is a further grant of a pension of £2 3s. 4*d.* to Richard Mayott. In 1558 we have five of these still living, and their names are on the list of pensioners who paid the clerical subsidy in the diocese of St. David's due on the 29th of September in that year; the other pensioners had probably died in the interim.

The monk who was charged with coining spurious money in 1534 stated in his deposition that he was then 40 years of age; we do not find his name among the pensioners in 1558, when he would be about 64 years of age, therefore we may pretty safely assume

<sup>1</sup> Calendar, x, 721.

that he had died before this last list was prepared, or that he and Mayott, whose name was also missing in the last list, may have been compelled by necessity to part with their pensions, for, according to the Rev. F. A. Gasquet, "necessity compelled some at least of the disbanded religious to part with their patents, and speculators were ready enough to purchase the annuity 'for little or no money, or other thing given to the said pensioners, supplanting them to their utter undoing.'"<sup>1</sup> It was therefore found necessary, in the third year of the reign of Edward VI, for Parliament to apply some remedy to this state of things. An Act was consequently passed, ordering all persons who had obtained pension patents in any fraudulent manner to restore them within six months. They were to receive back whatever they had originally paid, and if they failed to deliver the grant, it was to be forfeited, and all future payment made to the original owner. At the same time, the officers and receivers were commanded to pay all pensions upon reasonable request, under a penalty of £5; and if they demanded more than their legal fee, they were to forfeit ten times the amount taken.<sup>2</sup> A subsequent examination was made by a commission appointed to inquire into the pensions paid in each county. From the report of the officials, which still exists for some counties, many interesting particulars are learnt about the monks' pensions. Many of the religious did not appear to claim their annuity; many were proved to have died, and others had not been paid for the past year or so. Of a great many who ought to have been in receipt of a pension, no tidings could be learnt, and in a good number of instances the original owner had long before parted with the grant.<sup>3</sup>

What became of the ejected monks of Strata Florida we know not, but there is a vague tradition in the

<sup>1</sup> 2 and 3 Edward VI, cap. 7.

<sup>2</sup> R. O. Chapter-House, Box 154, Nos. 2, 15, 25, 54, 61.

<sup>3</sup> *Henry VIII and the English Monasteries*, vol. ii, pp. 466, 467.

district that after the dissolution some of them lived on in poverty and destitution for many years, and that they continued to occupy some portions of the conventual buildings, depending for a precarious existence upon the charity of the surrounding farmers and others who had known them in the days of their prosperity and affluence.

It is also said that the old faith died hard in the vicinity of the Abbey, and that up to within the last one hundred years or so, and until the rise of dissent in the time of Rowlands of Llangeitho and Harries of Trefecca, the descendants of the people who had lived under the rule of the abbots and monks clung to the Roman Catholic religion, and that even now may still be detected observances and customs which may be traced to the influence exercised by the great Abbey of Strata Florida over a wide extent of Cardiganshire.

We have already traced the possessions of the Abbey of Strata Florida in the counties of Brecon and Montgomery, and shown, to some extent, the devolution of the estates subsequent to the dissolution of the monastery. Mr. R. W. Banks has, in his paper on "The Grange of Cwmtoyddwr", in the *Archæologia Cambrensis*, Fourth Series, vol. xi, given a very exhaustive account of the property belonging to the abbey in the county of Radnor; it, therefore, only remains to describe as far as possible the possessions of Strata Florida in the counties of Cardigan and Carmarthen at the time when the final suppression took place.

In the 35th year of Henry VIII (1543-44) a valuation was made of "divers parcels of the possessions" of the monastery of Strata Florida (*see* Appendix, p. xciii). This valuation was made immediately after the final dissolution of the abbey. At that time the crown was in possession of the whole of the Cardiganshire estates, and of the Rectory of Penkarok (Pencarreg), in the county of Carmarthen. The valuation sets forth very fully the rents and profits issuing from part of the granges, farms, and lands belonging to the abbey, and

the various customary rents which their tenants paid, some of which are exceedingly interesting as survivals of the seignorial dues and services which the Welsh princes received from their tenants before they granted the property to Strata Florida. The first item in the valuation is "the site of the late monastery aforesaid with the demesne lands". "The rent, with one garden, one orchard, and one parcel of land called the Cowart Grene, by the year, 5s." The "Cowart", or "Convent Green", is the field in front of the abbey, now called "the Green"; it formed the outer precinct, and was of considerable extent, bounded by a wall, and at the entrance gateway there was a building of some kind, in all probability a porter's lodge, the foundations of which have within the last few years been cleared away; from this a line of road, which can still be traced, probably paved with pebble stones, led direct to the inner precinct, which was entered through an arched gatehouse; this was standing in 1741, and appears in Buck's *View of the Abbey* (see plate, p. 87). The inner precinct was paved with pebble stones; some of the pavement still remains. Leland says that "the base court or camp afore the abbay is veri fair and large." There is a tradition in the neighbourhood that the pilgrims and worshippers at the abbey assembled in the "Convent Green", and then, removing their boots and hose, marched barefoot in procession to the great west door of the church, on all solemn festivals.

Nothing in the valuation is said as to the church or cemetery, which was very extensive, and, according to Leland, "wherein the cunteri about doth buri". Therefore it would appear that in this case, as in many others, some portion of the abbey church was used as the parish church; and, in confirmation of this theory, it must be borne in mind that part of the cloister, the chapter-house, and the whole of the church are now within the boundaries of the present churchyard of the parish of Strata Florida.

In the first lease of the abbey property to Richard Devereux, Esq., dated 20th March 1547 (*see* Appendix, p. ci), it will also be observed that nothing is mentioned therein as to the site of the church being demised to him; on the other hand, the “house and site of the late monastery of Strata Florida, and all houses, edifices, barns, stables, dovecots, pleasure grounds (?), orchards, gardens, and all our lands whatsoever within the fences, walks, circuits, and precincts to the site of the said late monastery belonging”, are most particularly set forth, and the lawyer who drew the lease at that time would have been equally as careful to specify the abbey church and cemetery if such had been included in the grant to Richard Devereux.

It would therefore appear that the tradition, that after the dissolution of the monastery, and until the time of the Commonwealth, the abbey church of Strata Florida, or some portion of it, was still continued to be used for the purposes of divine service, and that it was in the troublous times of the war between Charles I and the Parliament that the final destruction of the church took place, may have some foundation of truth.

Among the rents paid to the abbey will be noticed so many “topstan” or “topstones” of wool; this is a weight (11 lbs.) still used for buying wool in central Wales. The other weight or measure mentioned is a “teil”; this is also in use, and is an old standard measure of capacity—in South Wales equal to five and a half imperial bushels; in North Wales it is called a “hobed”, and contained four bushels. The “teil” was divided into eight parts, and each part was called a “mesur”. The word “kylmarche” is also mentioned; this, I am informed, is derived from “cyle (or cylch) march”, which was a customary payment or rent that a Welsh chieftain claimed from his tenants for the support of his horses. When he paid a visit to any portion of his estates, the tenants thereof were bound to find him stabling and corn, for the horses of himself and his retinue, and this in time became commuted

into an annual payment of so much corn or the value thereof, described as "kylmarche". The dues known by the name of "cymmortha" were also seignorial dues payable to the Welsh princes and chieftains, and in the nature of personal services or gifts in aid of the maintenance of the chief and his establishment, or works undertaken for his benefit. These became in time a direct charge upon the land, and took the form of a rent or fine, payable to the Abbey of Strata Florida every third year, and formed one of their principal sources of revenue.

The list of Granges in Cardiganshire, in addition to the demesne of Strata Florida, comprised: "Havodwen"; this was on the north side of the Ystwith, and probably included the whole or a greater part of the Havod estate now belonging to Mr. Waddingham. "Blanarian" is now called Blaenmerin, and is in the Valley of the Ystwith near Cwmystwith.<sup>1</sup> The Grange of Pennarth appears to have been a large and valuable property, situated in the comot of "Pennardd", in the Cantrev Penwedic, and lay around the town of Tregaron; this probably comprises the present Tregaron estate, belonging to Mr. Powell, inherited originally from the Stedmans of Strata Florida, who in Queen Elizabeth's time purchased the bulk of the abbey estates in Cardiganshire.

The Granges of "Comuscoith" (Cwmystwith) and "Mevenyth" were situated in the comot of Mevenyth, also in Cantrev Penwedic. This comot comprised the parishes of Strata Florida, Eglwys newydd, Yspytty Ystwith, Yspytty Cynvan, Llanavan, part of Llanbadarn fawr, Llanwnnws and Ystrad Meurig. The Granges of Cwmystwith and Mevenyth were probably in immediate proximity to the demesne lands of the abbey, lying to the north-east and south-westwards.

<sup>1</sup> This information has been supplied by the Rev. E. Jones, Vicar of Strata Florida. "Blanarian", in some documents, is described as "Blaenayron", and it is just possible that this place may have been situated near the source of the river Ayrôn.



The Granges of "Henynog" and Morfa Maure" were probably situated in the parishes of Llansantffraid, Llandewi Aberarth, and Llanbadarn Trefeglwys, on the sea-coast; the farm of Morfa-mawr now belongs to the Earl of Lisburne, who is also descended on the female side from the Stedman family. "Rhos Haminiog", as it is spelt on the Ordnance Map, is a range of high ground in the parishes of Llansantffraid and Llanbadarn Trefeglwys, and these parishes are all in the comot of "Anhunog", in "Cantrev Penwedic". This was the property mentioned in the charter of Rhys ap Gruffydd as being the gift of the sons of Cadwgan and of his wife Gwenllian. There were, in addition to the above, the Granges of Nant-vaye or Nant-baye, and Dorworthen or Diwarchen, not mentioned in the valuation of 1543-44, but they appear in other documents, as well as "Trevaes et Morva bichan";<sup>1</sup> the latter Grange is in the comot of "Anhunog". There are two farms in the parish of Llanbadarn Trefeglwys called Trefaes issaf and Trefaes uchaf. Nantbay and Dowerthan have not been identified, but the former is believed to be on the banks of the river Towy, in Carmarthenshire, near the boundary of the county of Cardigan.

Richard Devorax (Devereux), Esq., was appointed Receiver-General of all the possessions of Strata Florida upon the suppression of the monastery. Lord Ferrers, whose name appears in the depositions in the coining case before referred to, was appointed the King's Steward of the Crown Manors, and of the Court of the Abbot of Strata Florida. In the valuation of 1543-44, we have the salaries paid to these officials, and also to the bailiffs of the various Granges. It will be noticed that John Yorke is bailiff of the Grange of Mevenyth; he may be the same John York who was granted a pension, 31st Hen. VII (1539-40), and continued as bailiff of the Grange of Mevenyth, which

<sup>1</sup> See in Appendix, Valor Ecclesiasticus, 26 Hen. VIII, and Compt. Ministrorum, 32 Hen. VIII.

being in the immediate vicinity of the abbey, he had probably managed before the dissolution.

It has been already mentioned that the first grant of the abbey estates is by way of lease for twenty-one years, from the 29th September 1546, to Richard Devereux, in the 1st year of the reign of Edward VI (20 March 1547). The Receiver-General no doubt found that it was a valuable property he had to administer, and that a considerable profit might be made thereon; he covenants to pay an annual rent of £101 8s. 8d., and every third year £38 for the "Cymmortha"; and he takes, in addition to the Cardiganshire property mentioned in the valuation of 1543-44, the Granges of Cwmtoyddwr in the county of Radnor, and Abermule in the county of Montgomery, as well as the Grange of Dowerthyn in Cardiganshire, not included in the valuation. The Crown reserved only the growing trees and woods out of the lease, so that he must have had a very profitable bargain.

The documents of the Court of Augmentation show that a veritable scramble followed the dissolution of the monastic houses, and a vast amount of land changed hands very rapidly; therefore it would be extending this portion of my subject to an undue length if I attempted to trace the devolution of the Cardiganshire estates until they became the property of the Stedman family. In the Appendix will be found a copy of a conveyance from John Tomworth and William Dodington of London, to John Stedman, therein described as of "Stratclere" (Strata Florida), dated the 10th day of February, 9th Elizabeth (1567); and by this deed John Stedman purchases from Tomworth and Dodington the "Custome of Wooll" issuing yearly out of the "Granges of Meveneth, Comuscoith, Penneth, Blaynayron, and Enhmocke in the countie of Cardigan", late in the tenure of William David ap William, belonging to the late monastery of Strata Florida, which had been granted to William Horne, merchant of the staple of the City of London, by letters patent of

the 30th July 1563. This is the Custom of Wool mentioned in the valuation of 1543-44, and is therein described as "the rents demised to William David ap Ievan, by indenture sealed with the seal of the convent; and he renders therefore by the year £1." John Stedman pays £60 as the purchase-money for the rent of wool; and this document proves that the Stedmans were living at Strata Florida in 1567.

In addition to the documents before referred to will be found in the Appendix certain documents relating to leases proposed to be granted to Richard Broughton and two others, "to the use of" Robert Earl of Essex, the unfortunate favourite of Queen Elizabeth. From these particulars we gather that there had been a previous lease to the Earl's father, as well as the earlier lease to his ancestor, Sir Richard Devereux. Thus passed away into other hands the great possessions of the Abbey of Strata Florida, which had been granted to the monastery by Prince Rhys ap Gruffydd and his descendants.

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## CHAPTER V.

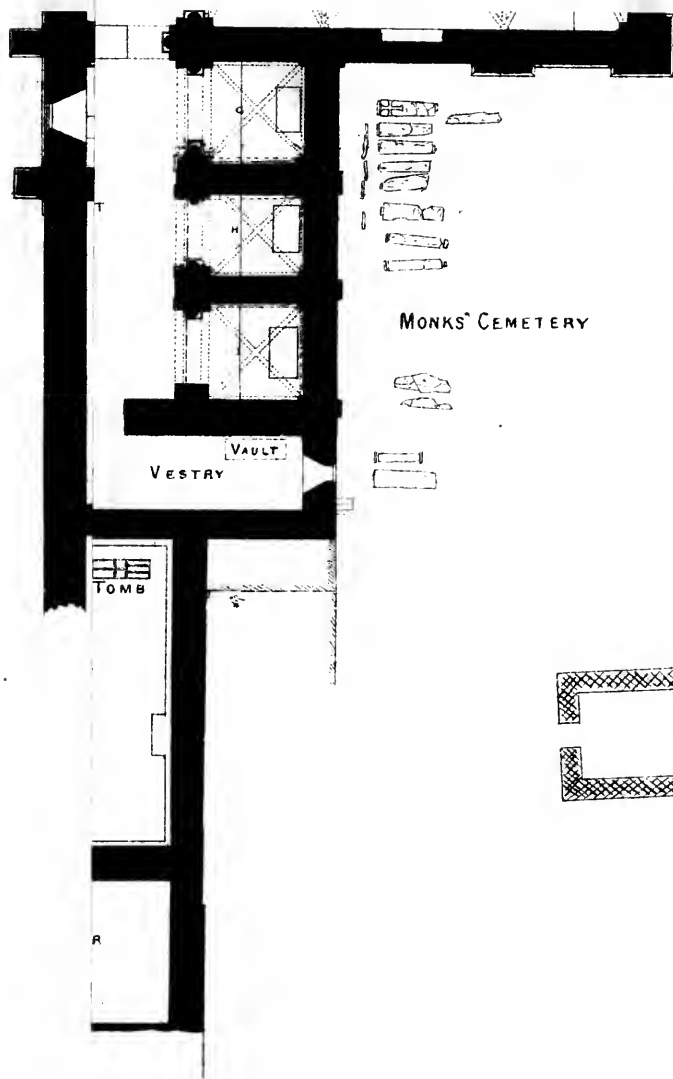
### AN ACCOUNT OF THE EXCAVATIONS AND ARCHITECTURE OF THE ABBEY.

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THE Cambrian Archæological Society was founded in the year 1846, and the first annual meeting was held at Aberystwith in September 1847. On Thursday, September 9. an excursion was made to the site of the Abbey of Strata Florida. On the Monday previously one of the general secretaries (probably the Rev. H. Longueville Jones, who for many years contributed a series of most interesting papers on the Ecclesiology of Wales to the *Archæologia Cambrensis*), accompanied by J. Davies, Esq., of Pantyfedwen, “proceeded to Strata Florida Abbey, where permission to excavate having been given by Col. Powell of Nanteos, Lord-Lieutenant of the county, they immediately set a party of labourers at work under proper superintendence. The spots selected for excavation were, first, for about twelve feet along the south wall of the chancel, where they expected to find traces of the sedilia, the piscina, etc. ; and, secondly, at the western corner of the south transept where it joins the nave, as this point would serve to determine the nature of the work, etc. The excavations were continued on Tuesday and Wednesday, and by the time the members arrived the pavement and walls were bare and ready for their inspection.”<sup>1</sup>

After the excursion an evening meeting was held at the Public Rooms, Aberystwith, and it might be interesting to some of my readers to know who were the early members of the Association who took part in the exca-

<sup>1</sup> *Archæologia Cambrensis*, vol. ii, p. 361.



STRATA FLORIDA ABBEY

The plan shows the following rooms and features:

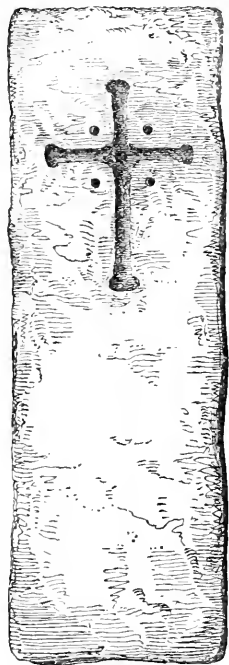
- Church:**
  - Nave:** The central part of the church, flanked by **AISLE**s.
  - Choir:** Located at the east end of the nave.
  - North Transept:** A side chapel on the north side of the choir.
  - South Transept:** A side chapel on the south side of the choir.
  - Base of Stairs:** Located between the North and South Transepts.
  - Library or Treasury:** A room adjacent to the South Transept.
  - Vestry:** A room adjacent to the Library or Treasury.
  - Altar:** Located at the east end of the choir.
- Monks' Cemetery:** Located to the east of the church.
- Chapter House:** A room located south of the choir.
- Parlour:** A room located south of the Chapter House.
- Cloister:** A central courtyard area, flanked by the **GARTH** (a garden or courtyard) on the south and the **CELLARIUM** (a cellar or storage room) on the west.
- Scale:** A scale bar is provided, indicating measurements in feet (0, 10, 20, 30, 40, 50, 60, 70, 80, 90, 100).

MONKS' CEMETERY

vations in 1847. I have, therefore, extracted from the Report of the Cambrian Archæological Association for that year an account of the proceedings, and the names of those who were present: "Thursday, Sept. 9, 1847. This morning, as early as nine o'clock, a large party of gentlemen, consisting of Sir Stephen Glynne, President; Lord Dungannon, the Deans of Hereford and Bangor, Sir Samuel Rush Meyrick, W. W. E. Wynne, Esq., T. Wakeman, Esq., James Dearden, Esq., Treasurer; John Hughes, Esq., T. L. D. Jones Parry, Esq., T. Allen, Esq., H. Kennedy, Esq., R. Kyrke Penson, Esq., W. Griffiths, Esq., J. Carline, Esq., W. Rees, Esq., John Davies, Esq., Edward Rogers, Esq., the Rev. Mr. Mahé, the Rev. H. Longueville Jones, etc., went on an excursion to the beautiful site of the Abbey of Strata Florida."

The Dean of Hereford, the Very Rev. John Mereweather, at the evening meeting, gave the following account of the proceedings of the day; and in the course of an eloquent speech, which would be somewhat too long to reproduce here, stated that "the spot where the ground had been turned up was on the eastern side of what had been once the south aisle. They found parts of the door, and in advance of that three or four tiles, rubbings of which he produced. There were two sorts of tiles found, some in dark glaze and others upon a white glaze. They were then attracted to another part of the ruins, namely, the eastern portion of the chancel, where they found a portion of a sort of casing of the wall, and under some of it a sort of moulding, showing very clearly that some of the building was composed of portions of an earlier structure. They also found a portion of the piscina, which was of a very early period. In immediate connection with these casings of the wall, which it might be stated were made of a light-coloured stone, there were found some more tiles, the figure represented upon them being a dragon. On some other tiles another subject was represented, which could not exactly be made out;

it appeared as if there were a figure standing in the middle of it, and flowers placed on each side. These were the only things found in that part of the ruins worthy of note. From the last-mentioned place they went to the westward of the building, where they found that most remarkable arch, which is the most perfect portion of the ruins; it contained extremely interesting features. The dimensions of the building,



Tomb-stone at Strata Florida  
now placed against the east  
wall of Parish Church.

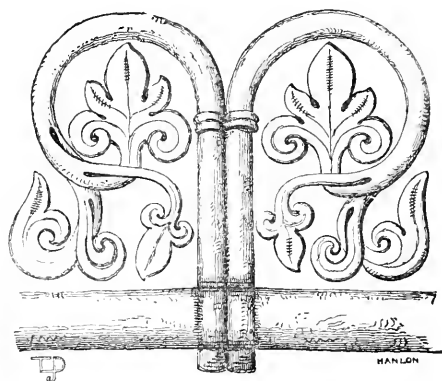
as they had been taken that day, were as follows: The chancel is 28 ft. 6 in. by 45 ft.; but there was the greatest difficulty in getting at the exact dimensions, as the walls were so covered with turf. The transepts were 45 ft. by 32 ft. broad. The nave, from the corner of the transept, was 140 feet long. This was not a very considerable size. There was a very interesting crossed stone in the cemetery, which was removed in the hope of finding some valuable remains; the only thing, however, that was found was a skeleton of considerable size, but nothing more of any value was discovered. This was all the information he had to give relative to their excursion; it was not without its value, and he should be proud if what had been done there that day should excite an interest in it; he hoped, indeed, that something would be done by

persons resident in the locality, so that their efforts might not be fruitless. If a committee were formed for the purpose of examining more minutely than they could on such a cursory visit those interesting ruins, and if a correspondence with the parent Society in London were entered into, it could not fail to be productive of much valuable matter. They



should first endeavour to raise a sufficient sum to clear the whole of the area of that venerable ruin. Those who would engage in the work would be amply recompensed for any labour or expense they might be put to in their researches. If the only result of the Society to South Wales were the careful exploration of that beautiful ruin, their time would not have been thrown away."

At the same meeting a paper on the "History and Architecture of Strata Florida Abbey", by the Rev. George Roberts, Vicar of Monmouth, was read; in this paper, which is published in the *Archæologia Cambrensis*, vol. iii, pp. 110-136, the author gives an

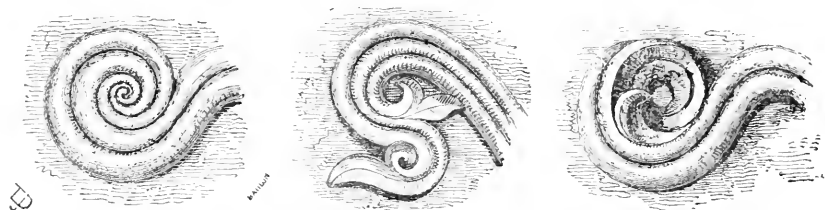


Ornament on Key-Stone of West Doorway.

interesting account of the site and foundations of the abbey; and discusses the question of who were the founders, and the origin of the name.

The history of the abbey he gleaned from the *Myfyrian Archaeology*, vol. ii, and from Caradoc of Llancarvan's *Chronicle*; he also gives a very complete list of the illustrious individuals buried in the abbey from 1175 to 1480. The author dealt with the subject of the charters and possessions of the abbey; and in his description of the state of the ruins he thus describes the western doorway: "It is a round-headed

Norman arch, and formed the west entrance to the church. Sir R. C. Hoare and other antiquaries agree in saying that this arch in its ornaments resembles no other ancient specimen in the kingdom. The co-ordinate arches, which make up the whole, are bound together by three croziers on either side; in other respects there is nothing singularly distinctive in this from any other Norman arch. Buck, in his *Views of Wales*, has given us the appearance of the ruins in 1740, when a considerable portion of the north transept with its pointed windows remained. From the round heads of arches (obtusely pointed), and other fragments of the ruins, we are justified in believing that the style of building was the transition between



Ornaments terminating ends of Bands on Wall-face, West Doorway.

Norman and Early English, such as at Llanthony Abbey, Llandaff Cathedral, Wenlock Priory, and other undoubted creations of the twelfth century; this, perhaps, may be taken as an additional proof of the present site always having been the site of the abbey; for, although the conflagration might have seriously injured it, yet it is evident the structure was not totally destroyed, since Edward I allowed £78 for its reparation; and if the work had been a re-edification from the foundation in 1294, we should have expected to see the Decorated rather than the Transition style; whence I conclude the building of 1164 was repaired after the fire of 1294, with its peculiarities of style preserved or restored."

Sir S. R. Meyrick, in his *History of Cardiganshire*, says: "The walls had glazed tiles affixed to them in the

style of the paintings we meet with in old missals, marked with quatrefoils; and these are frequently dug up, as are the tiles of the pavement, which consist of intersecting circles.<sup>1</sup> Painted glass has also been found; indeed, it seems that no expense was spared to render this a most magnificent building. Freestones are dug up which were ornamental, having circles touching each other carved on them.<sup>2</sup>

"About 1800, a fine silver seal was found on part of the land once occupied by the abbey, by a boy ploughing; it is circular, and the size of a crown piece; and was sold to an itinerant Jew for a few shillings; the arms of the abbey were engraved upon it. In 1807 another seal was found, which belonged to an abbot; the impression, a Virgin and Child; silver; in shape, a Gothic ellipse," etc.

This seal is now in the British Museum, and the woodcut at head of chap. iv is engraved from it.

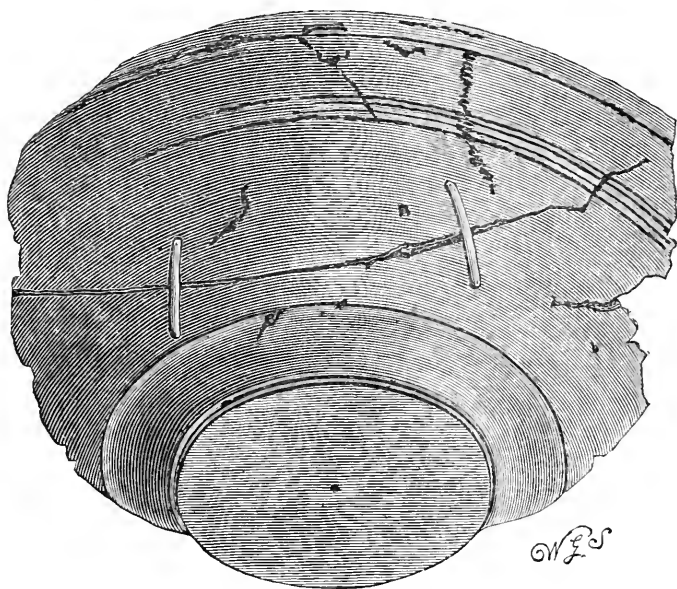
Nothing more appears to have been done in the way of excavation at Strata Florida after the Aberystwith meeting in 1847; the Dean of Hereford's eloquent appeal to the residents in the locality to form a committee and raise a sufficient sum to clear the whole of the area of the ruins produced no result, and it still continued to be the quarry of the surrounding district, the considerable village of Pont-rhyd-fendigiad having been to a large extent built out of the fallen walls of this once magnificent building.

On the 22nd of August 1878, the Cambrian Archaeological Association again visited Strata Florida from Lampeter, where the annual meeting was held that year, under the presidency of the Lord Bishop of St. David's. The Bishop in his opening address, as President of the Association, thus referred to Strata Florida Abbey: "Of the monasteries, Strata Florida was the greatest and most famous, and doubtless its church was

<sup>1</sup> Sir S. R. Meyrick is mistaken as to this; the recent excavations have disclosed no trace of wall-tiles.—S. W. W.

<sup>2</sup> Internal jambs of the east window.—S. W. W.

the most important ecclesiastical edifice in the county (Cardigan). Its dimensions seem to have been sufficiently ascertained. It was a cruciform building, doubtless wanting the most prominent feature of an English minster, the central tower, since that was the rule of the religious order by which it was erected. I believe it was about two hundred feet in length, being thus inferior in size to St. David's, Llandaff, or Brecon; but superior to St. Asaph and Llanbadarn-Fawr. It



The Strata Florida Cup.

ranged pretty nearly with Bangor. There is only one fragment of any interest; but this is remarkably beautiful, and of unusual character."

The Bishop also referred to the very curious cup still preserved at Nanteos, and said "It is supposed to have been a possession of the Abbey of Strata Florida, and to have passed with that demesne from the Stedmans to the Powells. In the days of my youth, and probably long since, it was supposed to possess healing powers which

could only be called miraculous. It was sent for to the house of a sick man, and some valuable object was left as a pledge to insure its safe return. The patient had to drink wine or some liquor out of it. Not content with this, he sometimes nibbled a piece from its edge, hence its present unshapely condition. The source of its alleged virtues was supposed to lie in its having formed a portion of the True Cross. I think there can be little doubt that so much of its pedigree is true as traces it to the possession of the Cistercians at Strata Florida. Nothing is more probable than that it was preserved in their church, as a relic to which thaumaturgic powers were ascribed. The veneration accorded to it in the neighbourhood, and, still more decidedly, a regard for their own health and that of their families, would prompt the country-people to bring some pressure to bear on those who would otherwise have destroyed it, to secure this valuable relic. Probably the new lords of Strata Florida had some belief in its efficacy. If this account of the matter is true, the relic is extremely interesting, as an example of the survival of mediæval belief, and even of mediæval practice, down to our own day, in a country in which the popular religious sentiments are certainly not tinged with mediævalism."

While on a visit at Nanteos for a few days in November 1887, I made some inquiries from my host, William Powell, Esq., and found that the custom to which the Bishop refers still prevails, and the cup is continually in use throughout the district by people who have faith in its healing powers. At the time I was there it was away. The borrower is required to deposit a sum of money, and give an acknowledgment for its safe return; sometimes the deposit takes the form of a watch or other article of value. There are a number of the receipts at Nanteos, some of them rather curious, as having indorsed upon them the nature of the cure effected. When the borrower returns the cup, he of course gets

back the deposit. The belief in its curative virtues extends over a wide district of Carmarthenshire and Cardiganshire, and numbers of instances of cures supposed to have been effected by taking food and medicine out of the cup are related and believed implicitly by the small farmers and peasantry. The cup is of very dark wood, and may have been a mazer-cup belonging to the abbots of Strata Florida.

The members of the Association visited the abbey during the Lampeter meeting, and the Report thus refers to its then condition: "The uncared-for look of the place may have, however, an attraction for the archæologist, who, reflecting upon the former greatness of the abbey, and the prominent place it has occupied in the annals of the past, as the burial-place of the princes of South Wales, and the home of its chief archives, and looking upon the heaps of *débris* that now mark the site, would fain hope that a careful and intelligent examination will some day bring to light, not only the plan and outline of the former buildings, but also disentomb some things of interest and value that must now lie concealed beneath the masses of earth and stones."

It was in 1886 that the first step was taken towards excavating the ruins; in that year Mr. R. W. Banks, the Treasurer of the Cambrian Archæological Association, mentioned at the Swansea Meeting that the author of this work contemplated an early visit to Strata Florida, with a view to make accurate drawings of the few architectural remains and a ground plan of the buildings, and suggested that the Society might afford material aid if it granted him £5 for labourers' work in excavations to trace the lines of the walls. After a discussion, it was resolved to allow £5 out of the funds of the Society for the purpose; and, as I have already mentioned in the Preface, this was most liberally supplemented by a donation from Mr. Banks of another £5. The work was commenced in June 1887. The excavations were carried on continuously for a fortnight, enabling me to prepare a general plan,

and some drawings of the details of the abbey church, and a portion of the conventual buildings.

I prepared a report, which was read at the Denbigh Meeting of the Cambrian Archæological Association on August 23rd, 1887. That report was printed in the *Archæologia Cambrensis*, vol. iv, Fifth Series, pp. 290-299, and is here partially reprinted; it gives a full account of the work then done, and the results obtained.

### REPORT.

The Cambrian Archæological Association, at their last annual meeting, having made a grant towards the expenses of exploring the ruins of Strata Florida Abbey, I have now the pleasure of reporting to the Association the result of the excavations that have been made. Work was commenced in June last, and within a fortnight I had cleared enough of the ground to enable me to define the general outline of the abbey church. I am now in a position to lay before you a plan of the church and chapter-house, with some details of the very beautiful architecture of one of the finest ecclesiastical buildings in Wales. To give some idea of its size, I have prepared a tabulated statement showing the relative dimensions of some Welsh cathedrals and abbeys which can be compared with the dimensions of Strata Florida.

Name.	Total Length.	Length of Nave.	Breadth of Nave and Aisles.	Length of Transepts, including Central Tower.	Breadth of Transepts.	Square of Lantern, Central Tower.	Length of Choir.	Breadth of Choir.
Strata Florida Abbey	213' 0"	132' 6"	61' 0"	117' 3"	28' 0"	28' 0"	52' 6"	28' 0"
St. David's Cathedral <sup>1</sup>	208 10	127 4	51 3	116 0	27 3	27 0	53 6	30 3
St. Asaph Cathedral <sup>2</sup>	—	86 0	68 0	108 0	—	29 6	—	—
Bangor Cathedral <sup>3</sup>	—	116 0	60 0	96 0	—	—	—	—
Llandaff Cathedral <sup>4</sup>	—	107 0	70 0	—	—	—	—	—
Abbey Cwmhir <sup>5</sup>	—	242 0	69 10	135 8	32 0	—	—	—
Brecon Priory Church	170 0	107 0	34 0	114 0	—	29 0	34 0	29 0
Neath Abbey	—	110 0	—	110 0	—	—	—	—

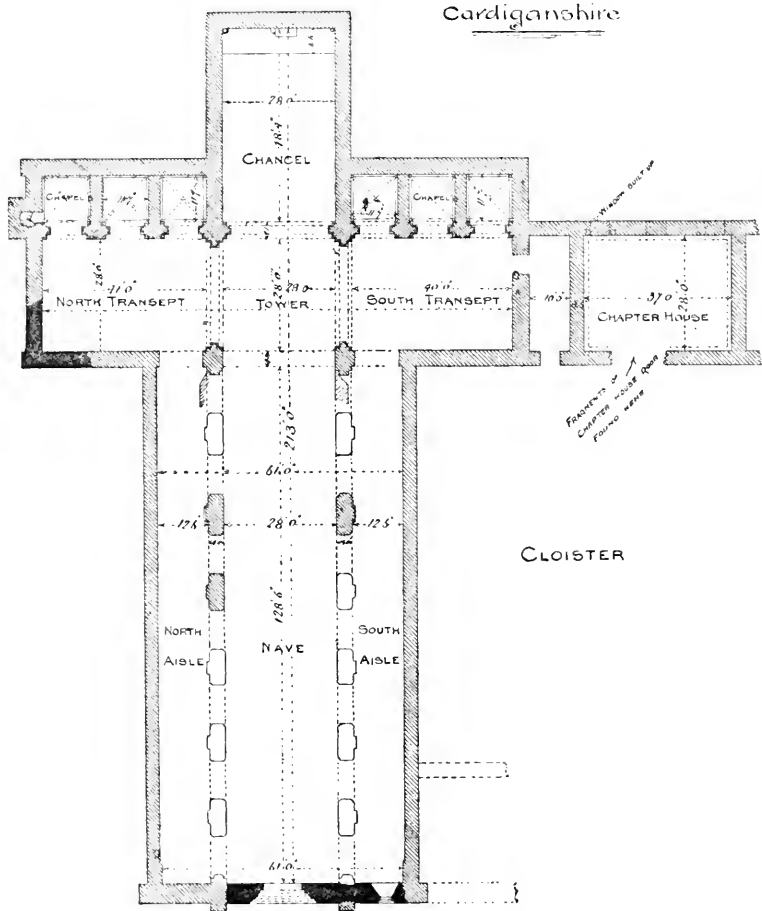
<sup>1</sup> As built by Bishop Peter de Leiâ.

<sup>2</sup> Other dimensions not known.

<sup>3</sup> Ditto,      <sup>4</sup> Ditto. No transepts.

<sup>5</sup> Never completed.

THE ABBEY CHURCH OF  
STRATA FLORIDA  
Cardiganshire



GROUND PLAN

STEPHEN W. WILLIAMS F.R.I.B.A.

RHYADER

RADNORSHIRE

0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 (IN) FEET

Aug. 1887

F. G.

ENTERED AT STATIONERS HALL



The plan accompanying this report shows in black the portions of the walls which were above ground at the time when the excavations were commenced, and the part which is etched shows the general outline of the foundations so far as they have been determined up to the present time. Careful measurements were made as the work proceeded, and from these measurements, the plan accompanying this report has been deduced, and, in addition, accurate drawings have been made of all mouldings and carved stone-work that have been found. The principal portion of the ruins visible above ground before the commencement of the excavations was a fragment of the west wall of the abbey church, comprising the great west doorway and the west window of the south aisle. The former is in a very good state of preservation, and in design is probably unique, I am not aware of any example in England or Wales at all like it; it consists of a deeply-recessed semicircular arch with five nook shafts set in square jamb moulds carried completely round the arch without any break, and with bold moulded bands, six on each side, and one in the line of the centre of the keystone, terminating on the wall-face with a richly-sculptured ornament resembling a pastoral staff, the carving being very good, and the ornament well designed, the keystone ornament being double and reversed.

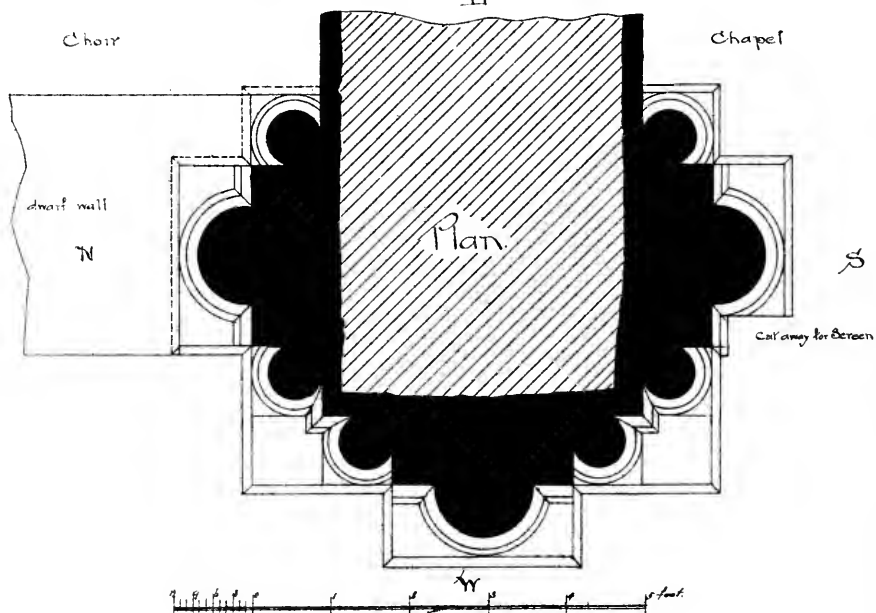
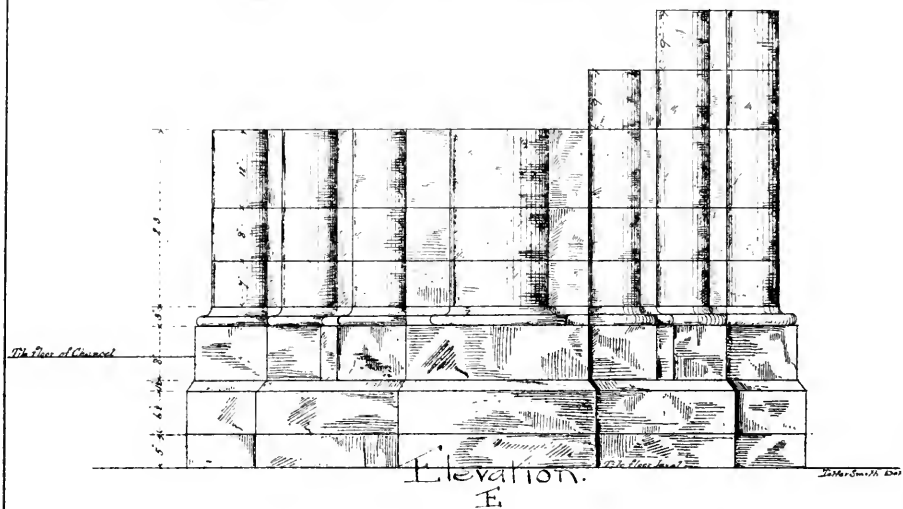
On the right of the doorway is the space occupied by the western buttress of the south arcade, which it was found corresponded with the line of piers, and south of that is the west window of the south aisle of the nave, a plain and very early Pointed Transitional or semi-Norman window, which apparently was not glazed originally, there being no grooves for the glass; but it was recessed for a shutter, and the holes are still in existence, showing how the window was probably glazed at a later period. The rear arch of this window has been destroyed; it had a plain splayed opening internally. The rear arch of the western doorway is

modern, having been inserted by the late Col. Powell of Nanteos some years ago, with a view to protect it from further dilapidation.

At the north-west angle of the north transept still stands a fragment of the wall, about forty feet above the ground-level; internally a small portion of the moulded stringcourse remains, and there are traces of an angle-shaft with its carved capital; externally, at about the same level, is a fragment of a stringcourse, which in all probability was the base of a great three-light window, which lighted the northern transept. During the last winter a considerable portion of this fragment fell, and the remainder will soon follow unless some steps are taken to preserve it. With the exception of the fragments mentioned above, nothing whatever remained above ground, and the entire site of the abbey church was a mass of shapeless mounds and *débris*; the site of the monastic buildings being partially covered by the modern farmhouse, and of these very few traces remain. I found that the threshold of the western doorway was buried beneath about three feet of accumulated earth, and the first step was to clear this away, and thus ascertain the level of the floor. From the centre of the doorway a line was set out through the building, and, by means of a trench cut through the eastern wall of the choir, the total length of the church was ascertained to be 213 feet within the walls. The line of the western wall of the north transept was then followed until we came upon the north-eastern angle of the north wall of the nave, where I found the respond of the arch between the north aisle and transept; continuing the excavation in the same direction, we were fortunate in finding the north-western pier of the great central tower, and at the level of the floor was discovered the first piece of tiling *in situ* in the floor of the north transept, just inside the archway from the north aisle. Having thus ascertained the situation of these important points, I was enabled to set out and sink



# S.E. Central Tower Tiers.



down to the south wall and the north-western angle of the nave, giving a total width of nave and aisles of sixty-one feet. The general direction of the piers of the nave was ascertained, and sufficiently excavated to show that there were seven arches in the nave arcade. Fragments found in the immediate vicinity of the piers which have been uncovered lead me to believe that the nave arcade was of pointed arches richly moulded; on the outside of each pier was a respond, apparently intended to carry an arch, and with the intention eventually of vaulting the aisles; but we have not yet been able to discover a corresponding respond on the north and south walls of the aisles. I do not think the nave or aisles were ever vaulted. The whole of the piers of the great central tower have been partially uncovered, and it will be noticed, upon reference to the plan, that they do not correspond, the western piers corresponding with the line of the nave arcade, and the eastern piers with the line of arcades which opened into the eastern chapels of the north and south transept, the effect of which, when perfect, must have been very grand. Enough of the ruins has not yet been uncovered to speak with any degree of certainty as to the arches which formed the lantern of the great central tower, but I am inclined to believe they were pointed, and, from some fragments that have been found, they were evidently richly moulded. The shaft supporting the inner members of the lantern arches were semicircular, and attached to the square piers, the outer members being carried on three-quarter nook shafts. The bases are of late Norman or Transitional type.

In continuing the excavation along the line of the north transept-wall, we came upon the respond of the arcade of the north-eastern chapel of the north transept, and immediately beyond found a circular turret staircase, which evidently was the approach to the upper stages of the central tower; continuing on this line we came upon the north-eastern angle of the

chapel, and by following it in a southern direction, we were enabled to trace the three eastern chapels of the north transept, and further excavations revealed a corresponding series of chapels in the south transept. These chapels were evidently groined, as fragments of the groining-ribs were found, and there was a string-course, about eight feet above the floor-level, running round each chapel ; and in each angle a three-quarter shaft, springing from an elegantly carved bracket, carried the groin-ribs. We found in the south-eastern chapel of the south transept one of these brackets quite perfect, and in the adjoining chapel a fragment of another *in situ*. In this chapel was also found a fragment of beautiful dog-tooth moulding, and *in situ* a most perfect specimen of the exquisite glazed incised tiles, which have been used throughout the building ; these were alternate squares of heraldic griffins and dragons. Unfortunately, some visitors from Aberystwith were stupid and ignorant enough to break up this fine piece of work for the sake of carrying away some half-dozen or so of the tiles, a proof that it will be necessary, when once the excavations are completed, to place the ruins under the care of a local committee, who will doubtless appoint a proper custodian to see that no damage is done.

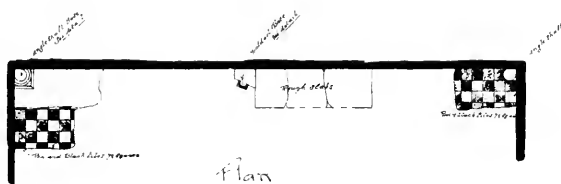
At the extreme eastern end of the presbytery we found that the original level of the floor had been raised 1 ft. 6. in. at some later date, and an inferior class of tiles used, and in so raising the floor the base of the angle-shafts in the north and south-east angles of the presbytery were buried ; the further excavation of the presbytery will probably throw some light upon this alteration.

During the progress of the works, considerable quantities of moulded stonework were turned up, portions of arches, shafts, bases, and caps of piers, and fragments of carved work ; among the latter a very artistic head of a monk, carved in a fine-grained stone, either Caen or Bere stone ; the whole of the carved work found is of the highest artistic character.

# East Presbytery Wall Skala Florida Abbey

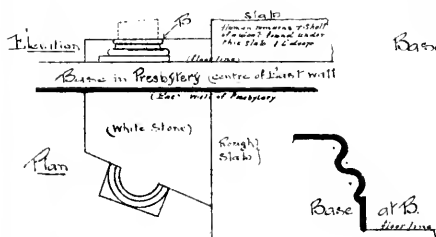
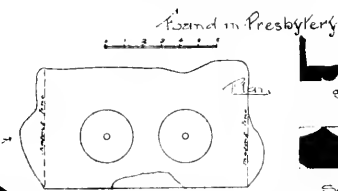
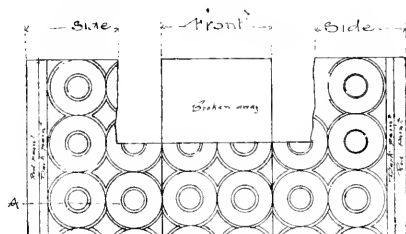
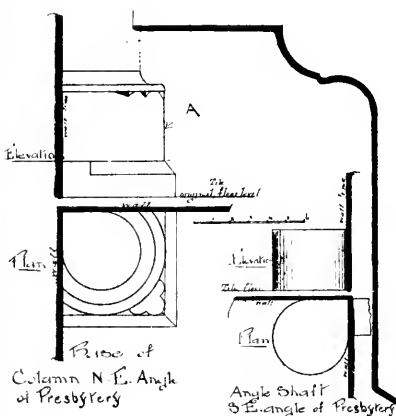


Elevation

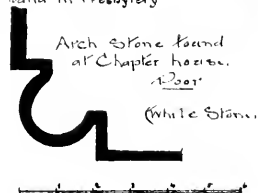


Plan

## JAMBS OF EAST WINDOW



## Base at A.



Arch Stone found at Chapter house. 1200' (White Stone)





We found traces in every direction of the action of fire upon the building; fragments of charred wood and melted lead turned up amongst the *débris*. The walls had been plastered, and also painted at an early date—I should say before the fire in 1284<sup>1</sup>—as in one of the chapels we found the traces of two coats of plaster, the earlier one of which had been coloured in a kind of diaper pattern. The stonework of the chapels and presbytery had also been painted, as fragments of small mouldings were found which had evidently been covered with vermilion. After the restoration, in 1300 or thereabouts, the monks had apparently whitewashed their church, to hide the action of fire upon the stonework, and the custom appears to have continued, as we have found fragments of mouldings with several coats of whitewash thereon. Four kinds of stone were used for the piers, shafts, mouldings, bases, and capitals, and other dressed stonework throughout the building, viz: 1, a coarse kind of hard sandstone, which appears to come from the mill-stone grit formation; 2, a very fine-grained yellow sandstone, from the new red sandstone series, much like Grinshill stone, but which I think must have come from somewhere on the South Wales coast, where that class of stone is found; 3, a fine purple sandstone of a rather slaty texture, which it is believed came from the same quarries, at Caerfai, near St. David's, as that used for St. David's Cathedral; 4, a considerable quantity of the work is executed in oolite,

<sup>1</sup> The *Chronicle of St. Werburgh* states as follows:—"1284. In the same year, within twelve days of Christmas, a great misfortune happened to the Abbey of Strata Florida in Wales. The fire and lightning struck the belfry, and burned the whole of it, with the bells, without the flames being seen; and then [the fire] devoured the whole church, which was completely covered with lead, as far as the walls, except the presbytery, which was seen to be miraculously preserved, inasmuch as the body of our Lord was kept there on the great altar, under loek (as elsewhere is the case, according to universal custom). Whatever was there, except the walls of the church, was burned in that fire, including the choral books and bells. This happened in the night."

or Bath stone, probably brought from Gloucestershire or Somersetshire, and varying in texture.

The work appears to have been done in alternate bands of coloured stone, as at St. David's Cathedral; and throughout the building there seems a wonderful resemblance, in point of plan and general design, to that portion of the cathedral built by Bishop Peter de Leià, who was consecrated in 1176.

The fragments of tile-pavements which have come to light during the excavations are very beautiful, and display great harmony of colouring; they consist of a variety of patterns, which will be illustrated fully in a more detailed paper which I hope to prepare when the excavations are completed.

In closing this report, I venture to hope that the good work commenced of clearing away the accumulations of rubbish and *débris*, which covers what is left of this magnificent building will ere long be completed, and would suggest that no time should be lost in doing so. When the building has been cleared and properly fenced, a local committee will be willing to take over the care of it, and place a proper custodian in charge, and I feel certain that when the entire surface is uncovered, very many most interesting remains will be discovered, illustrating the architecture and art of the period when this abbey was founded.

At the Denbigh meeting it was decided, if a sufficient fund was subscribed, to continue the excavations which were commenced in June 1887, to clear away the accumulated soil and rubbish from the site, and store on the spot the mouldings and other details of the church that were hidden from view underneath the masses of fallen *débris* and rubbish which had accumulated during three centuries of neglect and decay.

The Committee of the Cambrian Archæological Association determined to recommence the work of excavating the site of the Abbey Church in May 1888. At

that time the funds subscribed for the purpose only amounted to £90 ; but during the progress of the works subscriptions were received and promised raising the amount available for clearing the site of the church, sacristy, chapter-house, and part of the cloister, to £165.

On the 24th of May 1888 the works were recommenced, and a staff of men under an efficient clerk of the works were employed continuously up to the 4th of August following, when the whole of the funds being exhausted, it was considered desirable to suspend operations until further subscriptions became available. On the 20th August, a deputation of the Association visited Strata Florida for the purpose of inspecting the state of the work, and met the Local Committee which had been formed in the district, and whom it is hoped will continue the work inaugurated by the Cambrian Archæological Association, and take measures to preserve the ruins from further damage or decay.<sup>1</sup>

The whole of the site over which we had permission to excavate is within the churchyard of the parish of Strata Florida, a very extensive burial-ground ; but fortunately no modern burials had taken place in that portion of it occupied by the ruins or immediately surrounding them.

Having obtained permission from the Bishop of St. David's, Mr. Powell (the patron of the living), the Vicar, and churchwardens, and also Mr. Peacock, who has an interest in the site of the conventual buildings, to proceed with the works, one of the first things to be done was to build retaining walls of the rough rubble stone taken out of the ruins to fence in the site, and also to

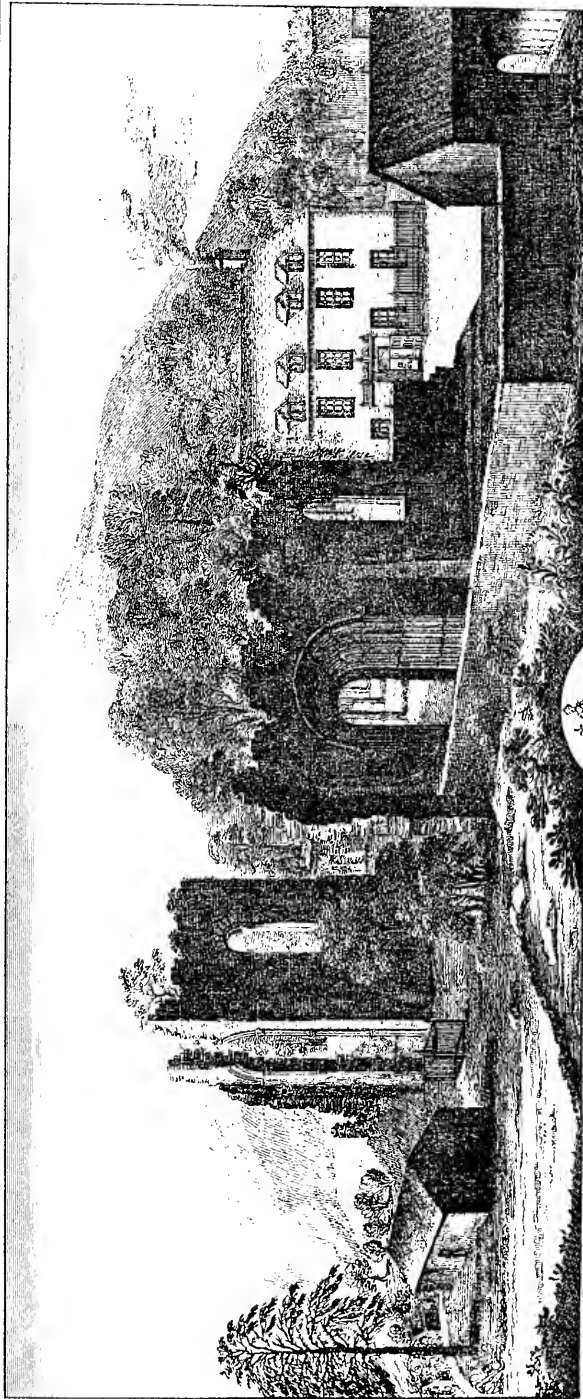
<sup>1</sup> The Local Committee have succeeded in obtaining further subscriptions, amounting to upwards of £100. This sum has been expended in covering in the chapels with galvanised iron roofs ; erecting iron railings in front of them, to prevent damage to the tile-floors ; in replacing the fallen shafts and some of the other masonry, and in such other works as have been deemed advisable to protect the ruins from damage during the winter months.

form a revetment-wall for the deposit of the enormous mass of soil and *débris*, amounting to about 3,500 cubic yards, which had to be excavated, but which could not be removed outside the limits of the church-yard.

The next step was to protect the walls both above and below the ground, as they were uncovered, and to prevent further damage to what was left of the ruins. A portion of the west wall, which was in danger of falling, has been refaced ; and the respond of the south arcade, a most important fragment, fortunately still *in situ*, has been carefully reset in cement. Unfortunately, for want of such preservative measures having been taken, a fragment of the north wall, which stood 40 ft. high above the surface of the surrounding heaps of *débris*, fell during the last winter, and now only about 10 to 12 ft. of it remains above the floor-level. This is the angle of the north transept, which appears to have been tolerably perfect when the view was taken of the Abbey by Buck in 1741, and it shows a portion of the great north window then standing. It was probably a triplet ; and the banded shafts which appear in Buck's view were, no doubt, the external portions of each side-light ; and I think there can also be traced in the view a portion of the projecting buttress forming the external wall of the newel-staircase on the north-eastern angle of the north transept, which was discovered in 1887, and has now been uncovered internally and externally.

Externally the north wall of the north transept has been cleared, also the east and south walls of the presbytery, the east wall of the chapels in the south transept, and of the sacristy and chapter-house, disclosing the freestone plinths and magnificent buttresses, and proving that all the external angles of the church had finely dressed ashlar freestone quoins throughout, of a very fine-grained and compact yellowish-white sandstone, the joints being very close, and the workmanship of the highest possible character.

THE WEST VIEW OF STRATFLOUR ABBY, IN THE COUNTY OF CARDIGAN



To Richard. Hedman Esq.  
 This Prospect is humbly Inscribed by  
 his most Obedt. & Servants  
 C. D. C. Pam. & Nath. l. Buck

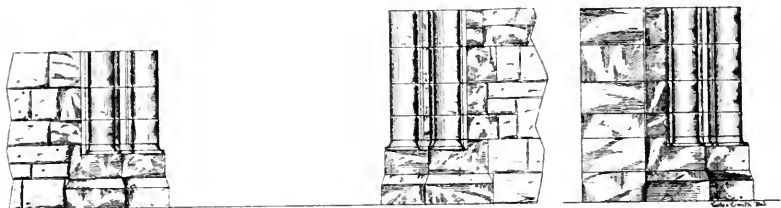
STRATFLOUR, in British-Monarchy of Edward. Prior, in Latin. Santa. Maria. in. House.  
 Prince of South Wales in the year 1282. built a Colateral Abbey of the Order of Cistercians, which  
 was burnt in the 16th Year by King Edward 1. and by him rebuilt about A.D. 1288. Many of  
 the monks of France were banished here, thus being in their time well supplied with wine, oil, and  
 provisions and live from A.D. 1288 to 1570 were kept and supported. In 1570 King Edward 6. a  
 spirit, then after the Dissolution of the Abbey, became the possession of John. Hedman Esq. in which  
 Family it has continued to Richard. Hedman Esq. the present worthy Proprietor.  
 Sent & Sold. Buck at the College. Published according to a Plan of London. March 15. 1741.





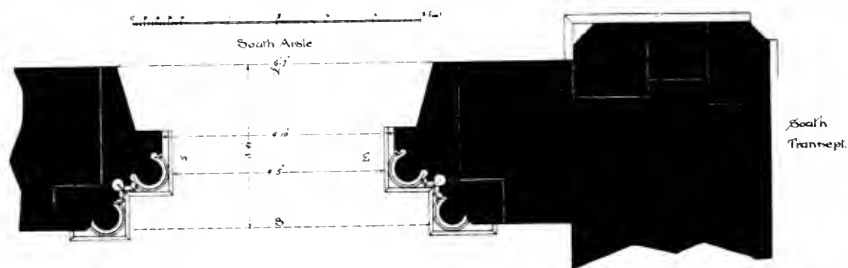
# Strata Florida Abbey Cardiganshire

## Details of South Aisle Door.



External Elevation

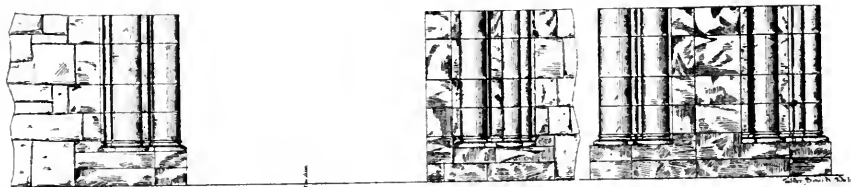
Elevation of East Lamb of Door.



South  
Transsept.

# Strata Florida Abbey Cardiganshire

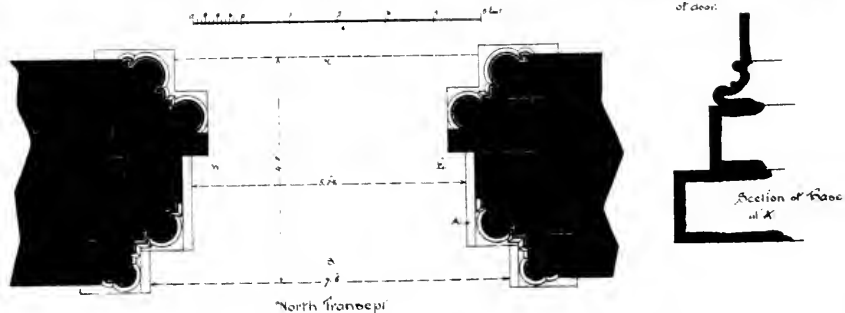
## Details of North Transept Door.



External Elevation

Internal Elevation

Elevation of East Lamb  
of door.



Section of Base  
of door.



A portion also of the south wall of the nave has been cleared in the cloister, enabling us to find the south-east door of the nave, with its beautifully moulded jambs, perfect for a height of nearly 4 feet. The external wall on the south side of the church was plastered, owing to the position here of the alley of the cloister next the nave, which was used as the living-room for the brethren, being furnished with bookcases against the church wall, and reading-desks or "carols" in the window-recesses looking out on the central area.

One jamb was also discovered of the south-western doorway of the nave, opening into the western alley of the cloister. At the north-west angle of the nave, the base of the angle-buttress has also been found. In Buck's view the buttresses of the responds of the north and south arcade are shown tolerably perfect. These have now disappeared, but the bases will, no doubt, be found when the pathway in front of the west wall, giving access to the ruins through the west doorway, has been excavated.

With reference to the west doorway, which with the western window of the south aisle are the only portions of the exterior, except the fragment of the north transept previously mentioned, that were visible before the excavations commenced, I have only to add, in addition to the description I gave in my Report, read at the Denbigh meeting in 1887, that it possessed another inner member, probably a banded nook-shaft and arch-mould similar to those remaining, and the jambs for the door. This was obliterated when the preservative works were executed, many years ago, by the late Colonel W. E. Powell of Nanteos, and which have preserved this beautiful door from the fate that has overtaken all the rest of this magnificent building.

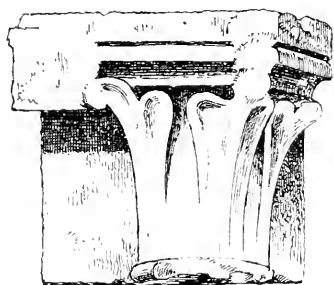
It must be noted that the rear-arch and semicircular hood-mould thereto are modern. The ancient rear arch, no doubt, followed the line of the flat, seg-

mental, bold label-moulding of similar section to the other stringcourses that have been discovered, running under the windows of the north and south aisles and in the eastern chapels.

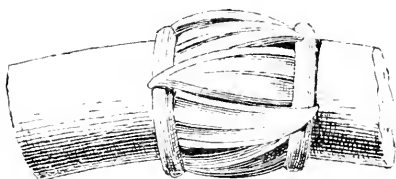
The outer walls of the nave do not appear to have had buttresses corresponding with the responds of the piers in the aisles, and therefore, if it was intended to groin the aisles, the transverse ribs would have sprung from corbels, and the builders appear to have considered that the outer walls were sufficiently strong to sustain the thrust of the aisle-groining. This was not the case in those portions of the church which were actually groined, viz., the presbytery and eastern chapels of the transepts. The excavation of the external face of the walls of this portion of the church has disclosed the fact that pilasters were built to take the thrust of the groining and arches at every point, and that the greatest care was taken to build them solidly and well.

We found no trace of groining in the north and south aisles; and there is every reason to believe they were not groined. The only indication that it was intended that they should be groined at some future time is the provision of the responds for carrying the transverse ribs on the aisle-sides of the nave arcade-piers.

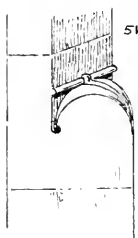
Following the line of external excavation we come now to the north transept, the whole external face of which has been cleared down to the original ground-level, and it has enabled us to find the plinths of the square buttresses of Norman type, and the elaborate mouldings of the north door. Here was found the fragment of carved moulding of lily-pattern, exactly the same as in the north door of St. David's Cathedral Church, where it is used as the hood-mould, and has been copied by Sir Gilbert Scott as the hood-mould of the west door of the nave; also some fragments of dog-tooth moulding, evidently a portion of one of the members of the arch; and a very peculiar, carved, foli-



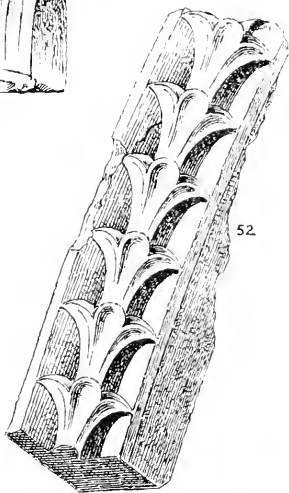
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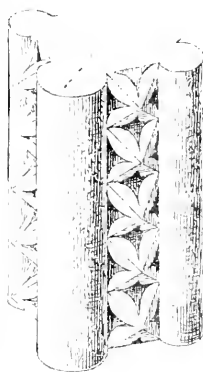
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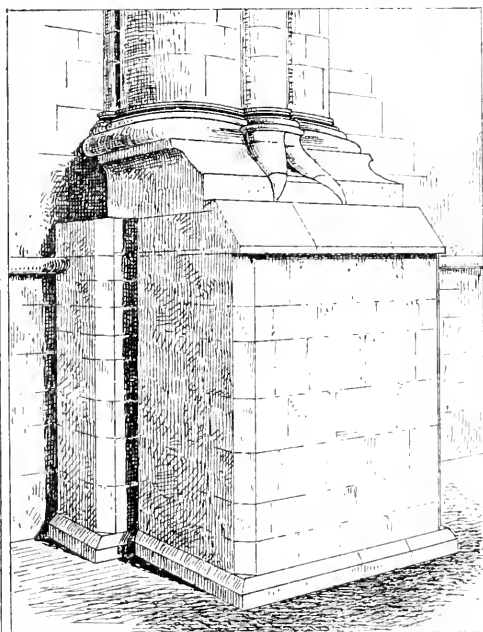
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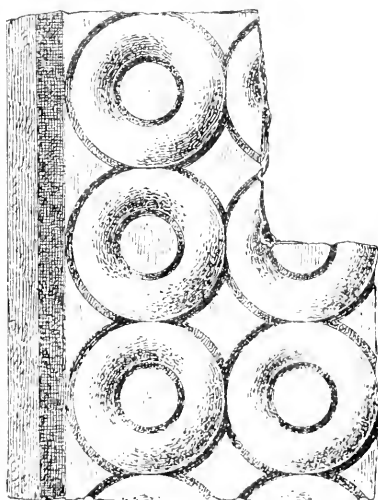
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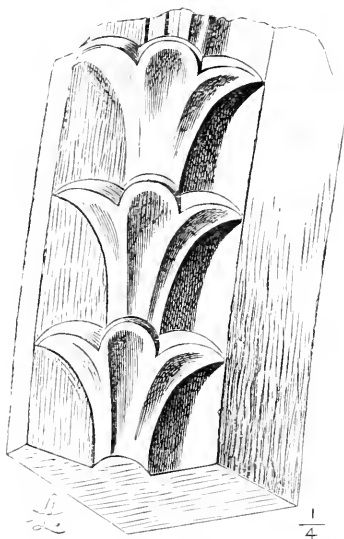


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ated centre of a hood-mould, which may have been carried round the head of the north transept window. There is no doubt this doorway was of equal richness, in point of design and ornamentation, with the great west door of the church.

The external north-east angle of the church has not been cleared, as it was one of the places selected for deposit of soil and *débris*; the space for that purpose



Moulding from North Door. One-fourth size.

being so limited, I was compelled to avail myself of this angle, and enclose it with a revetment-wall; but there can be no doubt that externally it is exactly the same as the corresponding angle on the south-east, which has been cleared, and where the interesting series of monks' graves have been discovered.

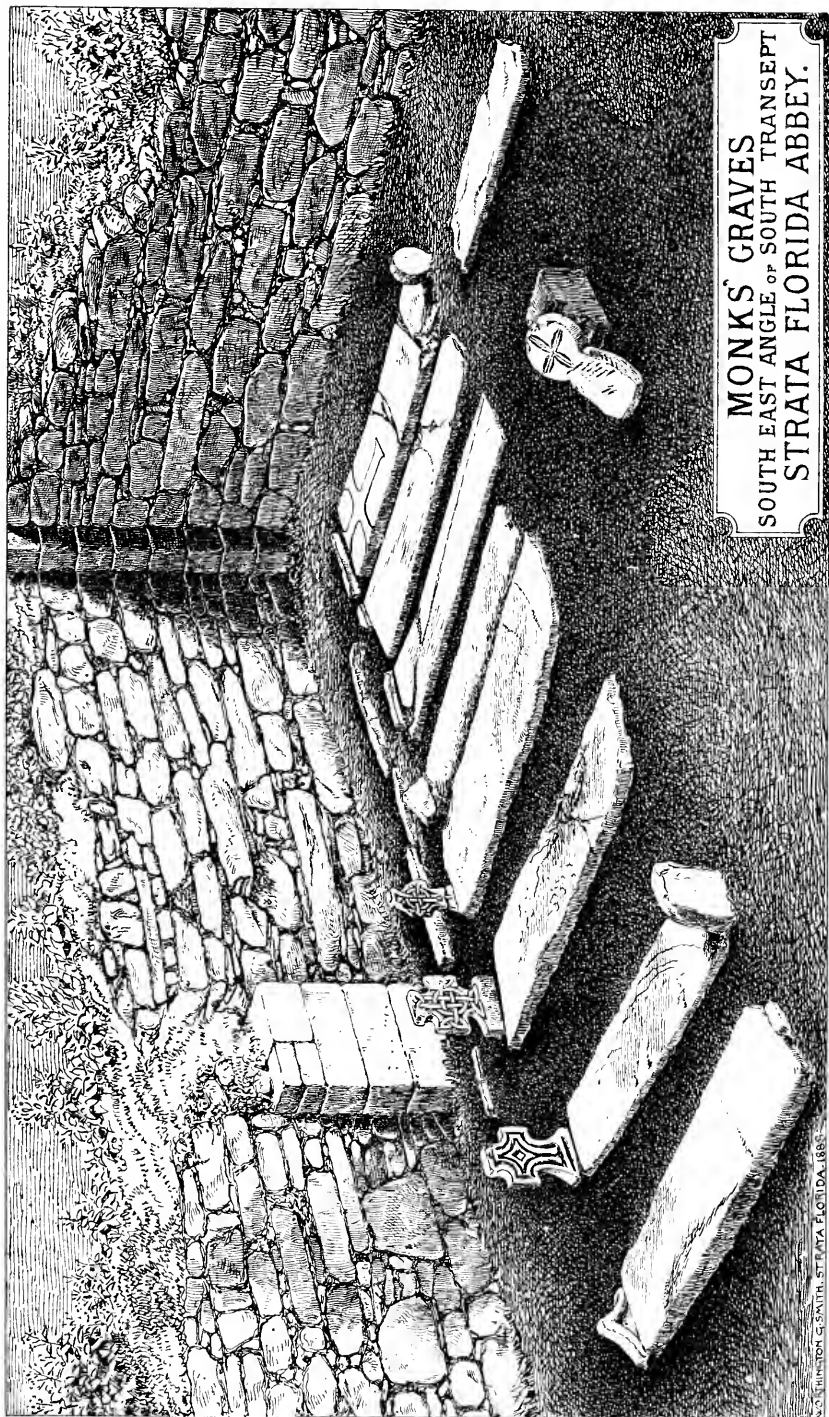
The external wall of the east end of the presbytery, like the north face of the north transept, has been cleared down to the original ground-level; and there were, in addition to the angle-buttresses, square pilasters carried up between the centre and side-lights of the east window, which was a triplet with external

banded shafts. These pilasters, like the buttresses, were of ashlar-work, and were probably carried up to the same height, and terminated in the same way.

Externally, on the eastern side of the south transept, have been found a series of monks' graves, some of which have still their carved head-stones *in situ*. They are of early date, with very curious interlaced rope-work pattern of Celtic type carved thereon. The graves are covered with rough local stone slabs, some of them showing the peculiar diagonal tooling of the Norman period. The first one found has a cross carved on it, and it possibly may be the grave of Cadell, brother of Rhys ap Gruffydd, who died in 1175, when the Abbey was being built. The second one has on it a rough outline still remaining, as if an attempt had been made to carve a portion of an ecclesiastical vestment in low relief. One of the tombs is coped; and in the small building which lies just outside the chapter-house were found two of the head-stones, and most fortunately one of them actually fitted the broken base of one that was missing, and which at an early date had been repaired with lead cramps. The cramps were still *in situ*. It is probable that this head-stone was broken at the time of the fire, and subsequently repaired, as ashes and burnt wood were found here in considerable quantities, together with pieces of lead, which had been melted into curious, fantastic shapes.

Continuing the excavation along the face of the eastern wall of the south transept, we discovered, still *in situ*, the window of the sacristy; and beyond this there is a change in the character of the walls, the workmanship being inferior, and there is an absence of the ashlar quoins. In fact, from this point, so far as the excavations have been carried along the east wall of the chapter-house, there are evident indications of alterations and later work, and there are also foundations of buildings which have been erected in comparatively modern times.

MONKS' GRAVES  
SOUTH EAST ANGLE OF SOUTH TRANSEPT  
STRATA FLORIDA ABBEY.







The small building east of the chapter-house (see plan) I think belongs to this class of work ; at any rate it was later than the church, and may have been some small outbuilding, possibly belonging to the Monastery, as there are traces of fire in the bottom of it as if it had been burnt down. Whatever it was, it did not disclose any features of interest when excavated, and the walls were simply rough rubble masonry. It has now been covered up with the *débris* and soil excavated out of the church.

The chapter-house<sup>1</sup> has also evidently been altered since it was originally planned. The entrance-door is not central. There is a door blocked up in the south wall, with mouldings apparently similar in character to the north door of the north transept.

The chapter-house has the foundations still remaining of the stone bench upon which the monks sat in conclave, and masses of the entrance-doorway have been found, consisting of arch-moulds, bases, and capitals, and a portion of the base-mould of one side of the door still *in situ*. The character of the mouldings

<sup>1</sup> Since the clearing of the chapter-house has been completed, there was discovered in the north-eastern angle a large monumental slab of peculiar pattern, with a cross in the upper portion, and three panels in the lower part. It had been crushed by the fall of the superstructure, and was in a very shattered condition. Underneath, in a shallow grave about 2 feet deep, was found a mass of human bones and twelve or thirteen skulls. The latter had been carefully placed at the head of the grave, and were in fairly perfect condition. One of the skulls appeared to be that of a female,—a small but well formed head. The others, so far as could be seen, were fine, well developed heads, and the teeth in some were very perfect and regular. The human remains were all carefully replaced in the grave, the tombstone repaired as well as it was possible to do so with cement, and relaid in the exact position and level at which it was found. The east wall of the ambulatory of the cloisters has also been discovered.

On clearing out the remains of the sacristy or vestry a large vault was found, which was built partially under the south wall of the south-eastern chapel. The wall was carried on a relieving arch, the vault being solidly constructed of good masonry. In this were some human bones and fragments of the canopied altar-tombs which were in the adjoining chapel.

found is clearly of later date than the church; they are of Early English type, whilst all the work in the church itself is distinctly Transitional or late Norman. The mouldings of the chapter-house door consist of bold rounds filleted, and deep hollows; the capitals are slender, with stiff-leaved foliage.

Fragments of capitals and bases found here belong apparently to the cloister-arcade, which was probably carried on slender double shafts with capitals, in which the dog-tooth moulding was introduced.

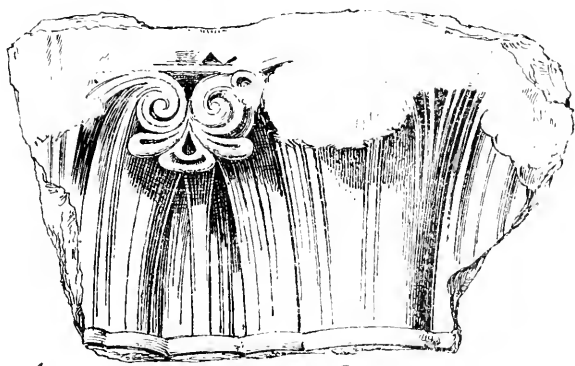
Returning now to the interior of the church, and commencing at the west end of the nave, one of the most important and interesting facts discovered was the finding of the western respond of the south arcade *in situ*, for a height of 10 feet above the floor-level of the nave.

At Strata Florida we have found a unique and peculiar type of arcade, the bases of the piers having chamfered plinths, with the angles also chamfered, carried up square for a height of nearly 7 feet above the floor. At this height rested the bases of the piers, the piers having a central group of four semicircular shafts with four smaller three-quarter shafts attached, carrying the sub-arch and outer members of the arcade-arches.<sup>1</sup>

The bases were richly moulded, and terminated with a peculiar claw-like ornament on the line of the piers. The base-moulds of the shafts were designed with a view to be seen from below, and above the level of the eye, which is another striking peculiarity at Strata Florida.

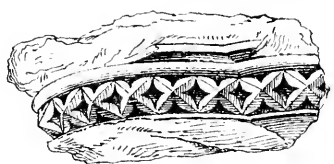
Alterations have been made in the shape of the bases of the piers subsequent to the great fire, and we found that fragments of moulded work had been used as quoins in repairing the damage caused by the burning of the Abbey Church in 1284. Originally all the piers

<sup>1</sup> Mr. W. H. St. John Hope and Mr. Seddon, to whom I pointed out this feature, agree in thinking that it is peculiar to Strata Florida Abbey Church.



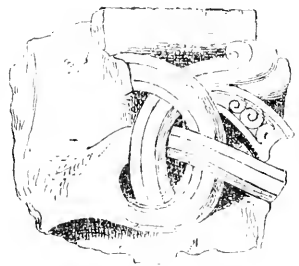
1

CHAPTER-HOUSE.

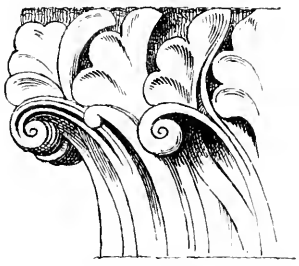


CHAPTER-HOUSE.

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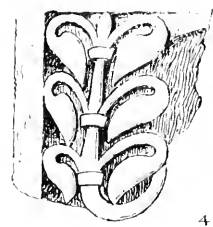


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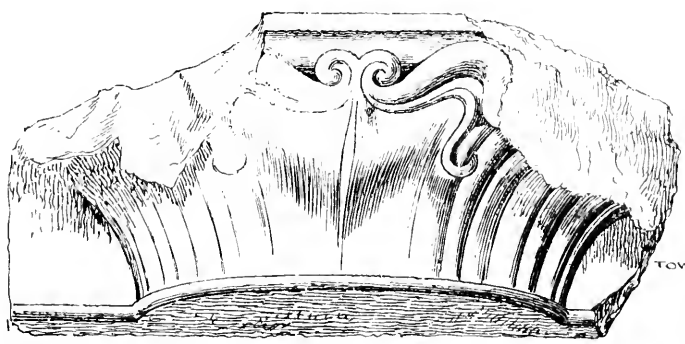


TOWER

5



4



TOWER

6



were of oblong plan, but have been altered at some later period, probably after the fire.

At the west end are still standing, in the two western bays of the arcades, the division-walls between the nave and north and south aisles, as at Tintern Abbey; but this longitudinal wall is not bonded into the square bases of the piers, but has been built at some subsequent date. It can be traced up to the pulpitum, as the foundations of it are still to be seen; and there is a set-off in the plinth of the sixth pier from the west, in the north and south arcade, which seems to indicate that it was part of the original intention of the builders to build such a wall. Whether it was removed before the dissolution of the Monastery, or at some later period, it is now impossible to tell; but it opens a field for inquiry upon this subject, and it would be interesting to learn what was the Cistercian rule with regard to this division of the body of the church into three portions, and whether in the earlier Cistercian churches it was part of the original design or not.

The arcade-arches of the nave differed, those on the north side being alternately of two different sections for four openings from the west, and then the remaining three openings corresponding with the fourth. On the south side this arrangement was also followed, but there was a third section introduced, so that in the nave there were three distinct sets of arch-mouldings of very early transitional type; in fact, of late Norman character. These are illustrated in the drawings, and the letters on the plan refer to the sections of the arches.

At the west end a quantity of fragments of moulded jambs were found with the keel-moulding, which indicates later work; and these probably are fragments of the great west window, which may have been a triplet of similar character to the west window of Llandaff Cathedral Church, with the external arches springing from banded shafts; and internally, no doubt, also somewhat resembling Llandaff, for upon making a comparison of

the fragments of mouldings found in this part of the church with the drawings of Llandaff which Messrs. Seddon and Carter kindly lent me, I am satisfied that the west end of Strata Florida must in many particulars have resembled the west end of Llandaff; and, indeed, the entire church seems to come in as an intermediate design between that Cathedral Church and St. David's, partaking in some respects of characteristics of both churches.

In Buck's view, before referred to, the external shafts are seen in the fragment of the window in the north transept; and I think there is very little doubt that the east window was externally of similar character, as near thereto we have found fragments of jamb-moulds with the keel-moulding, and a quantity of the band-moulds of very plain and early type.

At Strata Florida, as at Llandaff, we have pointed windows in conjunction with the round arch of the western door; and in the choir and south transept of St. David's Cathedral Church we have plain, pointed windows exactly corresponding in design with those found at Strata Florida.

The west window of the south aisle, which is perfect except the rear arch, had plain freestone quoins inside, and a stringcourse at the base of the inside sill, which was stopped by the respond of the arcade, and not carried into the nave. This window is of plain and very early transitional type. It had no grooves for the glass, but provision has been made for fixing the glazing by means of iron bars in an external rebate. Before the glazing was done it appears to have been closed with a shutter.

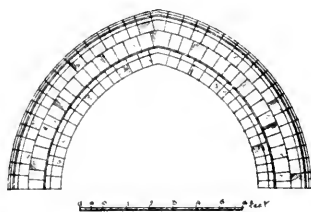
Fragments of window-jambs, sills, and heads, which turned up during the excavations are of similar character to the windows described, and it is probable that the aisle and clerestory windows were of the same type as the one now to be seen *in situ*.

There was a similar window in all respects at the west end of the north aisle; a portion of one jamb still

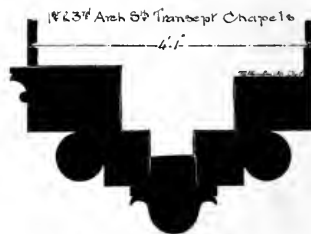
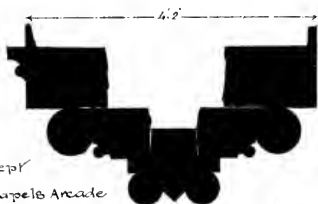
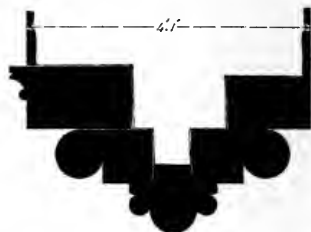


# Stata Florida Abbey

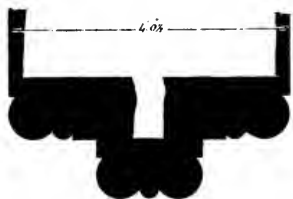
## Elevation Sections of Chapel Arcades



Centre Arch S<sup>d</sup> Transept Chapels



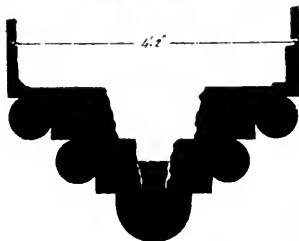
North Transept  
Chapels Arcade



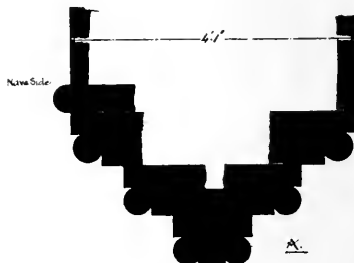
Stata Florida Abbey

Section of Arches to Nave Arcade.

C.



B.



Nave Side.

A.





remains inside, and the stringcourse is perfect. There is a fragment of projecting freestone, forming a flat sill, near the east end of the north aisle, which I think indicates a portion of one of the aisle-windows. This, with the window at the east end of the sacristy, and a fragment of a window blocked up in the chapter-house, are all the remains of windows I discovered *in situ*.

In the presbytery were found masses of the internal jambs of the great east window, which had fallen forward, and had been buried under the *débris*. They are of very peculiar type, much resembling in character the east window of the presbytery of St. David's Cathedral Church, which was built by Bishop Peter de Leia. Instead, however, of the lozenge or diagonal style of ornament, as at St. David's, this has a pattern with pellet ornament and concentric circles of distinctly Norman character.

In no part of the ruins was a fragment of window-tracery of any kind discovered. A mullion was found in the chapter-house, but it probably came from some of the conventual buildings.

The church of Strata Florida was built at one period, extending over a term of something like forty years, at the time of a transitional period of architecture, when the Norman was changing into the Early English. The Cistercians were among the first to adopt the pointed arch; and this they employed entirely at Strata Florida, except at the great western doorway.

I have been able to measure the radius of the arches from the fragments of voussoirs that have been found belonging to the nave and chapel-arcades, and also the arches of the central crossing which carried the low tower or belfry which was characteristic of the Cistercian churches of that period, the type of which may be seen in the neighbouring church of Llanbadarn Fawr.

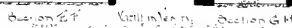
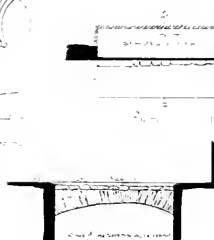
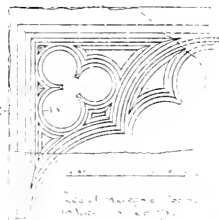
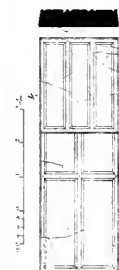
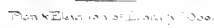
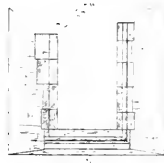
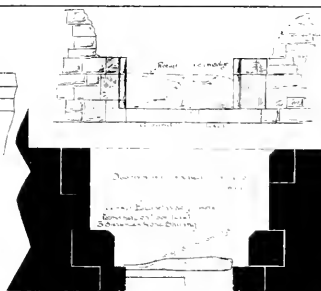
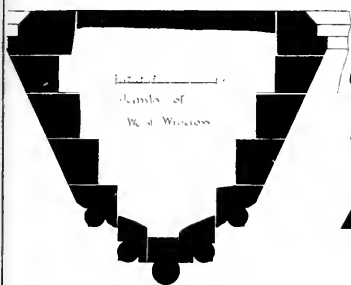
The tower was carried on massive piers, the two western piers being square on their western face and also along the line of the choir. Eastwards they were similar to the eastern piers, which are of clustered

shafts. The shafts supporting the inner members of the lantern-arches were semicircular, and attached to the square piers, the outer members being carried on three-quarter nook-shafts. The bases are of late Norman or Transitional type.

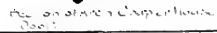
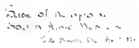
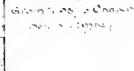
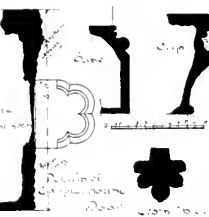
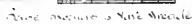
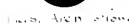
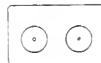
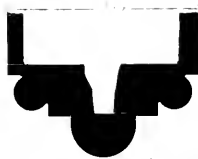
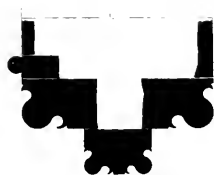
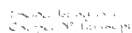
The building of the walls separating the choir from the transepts was clearly not intended in the original plan ; and if such a separation existed before the fire, the division was by means of wooden screens. There is no doubt that important changes took place in the ritual arrangements of the church when the tile-floors were laid ; the level of the floors was raised in the choir and presbytery, and these dividing walls were then built. Originally the floor of the presbytery was only one or two steps higher than the floor of the nave, and the choir and transepts were at the same level as the nave and aisles.

Of the four grand arches which formed the lantern I have been able to find sufficient fragments to identify the sections of each. The western arch, the sub-arch of which was carried on massive, corbelled brackets, one of which has been found perfect, was of different section and of different quality of stone from the others. The stone is a rather friable, coarse sandstone grit, and I have little doubt was brought from the more ancient Monastery of Ystrad Flur, as there are portions of similar stone, and similarly moulded, embedded in the altered piers of the nave ; and in all probability a good deal of the freestone mouldings of the old monastery was worked up at Strata Florida. In the relieving arch on the western side of the lantern, which has fallen in a mass, and a portion of which still remains intact, was embedded a small piece of the same kind of stone, moulded, and which had been painted in a pattern of red and yellow colour. This most distinctly proves that it came from Ystrad Flur. It would be quite possible that fragments of mouldings might get worked up in the walls during construction, pieces of waste from the masons' work, or a fragment of moulding accidentally

## Special Florida Agency



## Office: Thomas A. Weber





broken, but certainly they would not be painted ; and therefore this fragment conclusively proves that the monks of Strata Florida used up some of the materials from the abandoned Monastery of Ystrad Flur founded by Rhys ap Tewdwr.

The north and south arches were of different section, of alternate bands of white oolite and the purple stone from Caerfai, near St. David's. They correspond with the chapel-arcades in the character of their mouldings, and are distinctly Transitional in type.

The eastern arch was also of oolite, but of earlier form, the sub-arch being a bold, semicircular roll-moulding of Norman character. These facts indicate that the choir was in all probability first built, and then the transepts followed.

Passing from the choir to the north transept, it was found, upon clearing away the soil and *débris*, that the walls of the three eastern chapels of this transept were in a fairly perfect condition for a height of something like 4 to 5 feet above the floor-level ; the line of piers of the chapel-arcade being also sufficiently perfect to enable us to judge of what must have been the very fine appearance of the line of chapel-arcades looking from north to south through the arches of the great central tower.

In the south transept is the base of the staircase to the dormitory or cloister of the monks ; underneath was discovered what appeared like a grave, but was probably used as a locker or repository of some kind ; in it were found fragments of the canopied tombs, and a pair of blacksmith's tongs. Near this is a doorway opening into the vestry, which was vaulted originally ; the vestry extended the entire length of the south transept, but at some later period the cross-wall was built, cutting off the small building called the library. This cross-wall was not bonded into the side-walls.

In the chapels were found the bases of the altars, in each case fairly perfect, and tile-pavements of very beautiful design, of incised and encaustic tiles. In

addition to the tile-pavements found in these chapels it was discovered that the whole of the transepts, north and south, as well as the remaining chapels in the south transept, and the whole of the choir and presbytery, had been similarly paved.

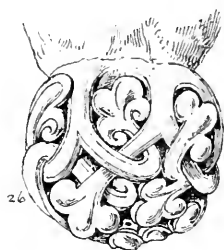
Some of the tiles have armorial bearings—the dragon of Wales, the griffin, the arms of Despenser, and one plain shield with a chevronel.

The tile-pavements are singularly beautiful in design, and of very rich glazing and colouring; some of the patterns are unique; and at Strata Florida I believe we have discovered probably the finest series of tile-pavements to be seen in any ruined abbey in England or Wales. As a rule, they are found in a most fragmental state—broken up sometimes, to be replaced by sepulchral slabs, sometimes from causes not explainable; therefore we are exceptionally fortunate in discovering so many beautiful examples of these early tiles.

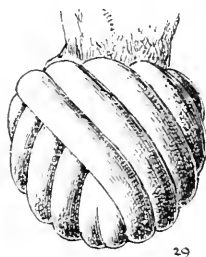
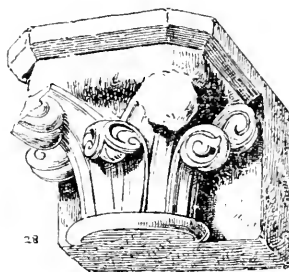
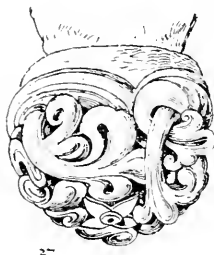
One of the patterns exhibits the figure of a civilian in the costume of the fourteenth century, clad in a close-fitting tunic, or “cote hardi”, reaching to the thighs, with the hood worn over the head and over the shoulders; close-fitting pantaloons or hose envelope the thighs and legs, and long liripipes fall from his close-fitting sleeves. In his left hand is held a roundel of some description (it may be intended for a hunting-horn), whilst a dog sitting on his haunches, and trees, figure as accessories. The costume depicted on this tile is of the period of Edward II, and therefore seems to fix the date of the manufacture and laying of these pavements at Strata Florida in the fourteenth century; and it is curious that the pavements have been broken and repaired in an irregular way, which probably indicates the damage done during the occupation of the abbey by Henry IV’s troops in 1402.

The original pavement of the church was formed of rough, local slate slabs, and they still remain in the aisles and western portion of the nave to some extent. When the tile-pavements were laid, the level of the

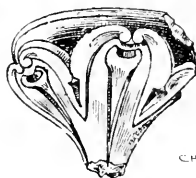




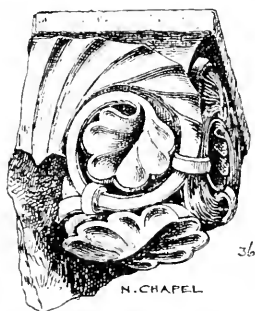
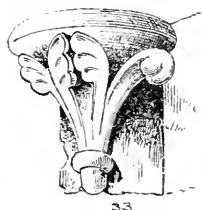
N. CHAPELS



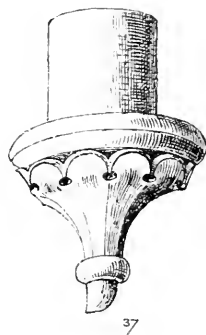
S. CHAPELS



CHAPELS



N. CHAPEL





floor was raised ; and the fragments of charred material found underneath the tiles, and lying at the original floor-level, prove without a doubt that this work was done after the fire in 1284.

The tiling of the nave west of the monks' choir, for a certain distance westward of the pulpitum, is formed of large red tiles with a greenish glaze, laid diagonally, but with the pattern of a large cross inserted, formed by a double row of tiles laid square to the lines of the church. I am inclined to think this portion of tile-paving marks the choir of the *conversi*, or lay brethren, and also the line of the rood-screen.

In front of the pulpitum are the bases of two altars, in front of which burials have taken place ; but no trace of inscription or memorial-slab has been found to indicate whose bodies lie beneath the pavement. The bodies were laid to rest in their monks' robes, without any coffin, and simply deposited in the earth at a depth of not more than 2 feet below the floor. In accordance with Cistercian rule, these bodies would probably be those of the abbots or of some of the nobles, descendants of the founder, Prince Rhys ap Gruffydd.

The chapels in both transepts had clustered piers corresponding with those of the central tower, and pointed arches of Early Transitional type, the mouldings of the arches in the northern chapels being different from those in the south transept.

Round the arches was a hood-mould which was carried round the whole of the transepts as a stringcourse, a fragment of which is still *in situ* at the north-western angle of the north transept ; and there were traces of an angle-shaft at that point, showing an intention of eventually groining the transepts, but which was never carried out.

The chapels were groined, and the handsomely carved central boss has been found in each case, with portions of the iron rings from which lamps were suspended in front of the altars. The groin-ribs of the three northern chapels are in section exactly similar to those

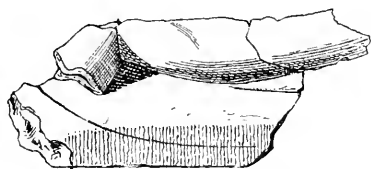
in the Trinity Chapel and the circular adjunct called "Becket's Crown" in the eastern part of Canterbury Cathedral Church, the date of which was 1174, which would exactly correspond with the period when probably this portion of the church was built. There are traces of wall-painting in these chapels, which had been subsequently plastered over and whitewashed.

The whole of the chapels and presbytery were painted, and there is adhering to the stone-work and mouldings some of the vermilion paint, which still retains its brilliant colour. After the great fire in 1284 the whole was covered with whitewash.

The wars of Edward I had impoverished the Abbey of Strata Florida, the great nobles and princes of Wales had been deprived of their estates, and the King's grant of £78 was but little enough to repair the damage which had been caused by his forces; and though from time to time generous benefactors, no doubt, had given the monks donations, enabling them to partially restore and beautify their magnificent church, the glory of Strata Florida departed when the independence of Wales was lost, on the death of Prince Llewelyn at Cefn y Bedd.

In the southern chapels the walls were found perfect to the line of the stringcourse, which ran round each chapel at the level of the windows; but not a trace of the windows remains, except fragments of the jambs, which had fallen outside. The altars in these chapels are detached from the walls, and behind these were found quantities of fragments of stained glass which had dropped out of the windows into the narrow space between the altars and the wall. It has all very much perished, but traces can still be seen, on some of the fragments, of beautiful, foliated work of the most delicate description; and there is no doubt that, in addition to the wall-painting, the windows in the chapels were filled with stained glass. Fragments of the leading have also been discovered in which the stained glass was fixed.





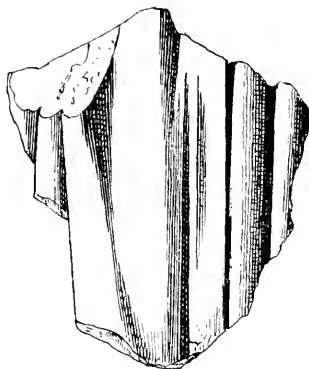
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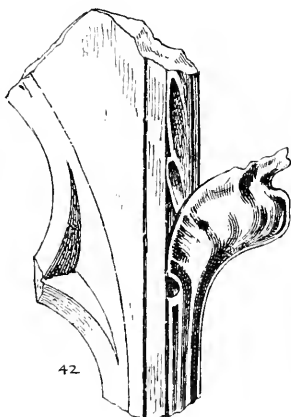
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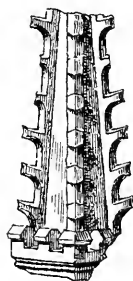
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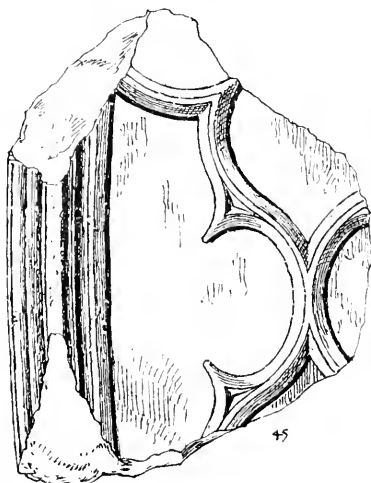
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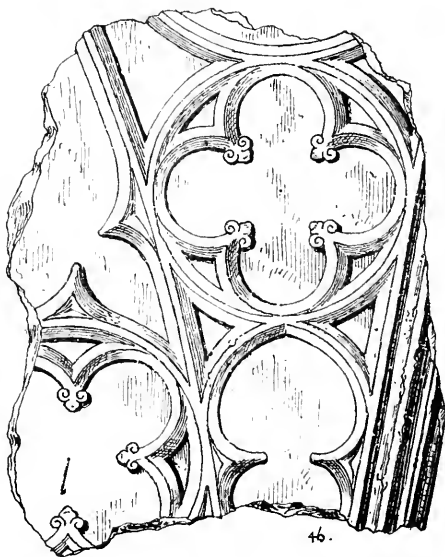
43



44



45



46

The groin-mouldings in one of these chapels were most elaborately decorated with dog-tooth ornament; and the southern chapels appear to have been much richer in ornamentation than those in the north transept. Three piscinæ have been found in the chapels—two fairly perfect, one rather fragmentary. The spaces for the sedilia and piscina were also found in the presbytery; and the piscina which was discovered in the excavations made in 1846 was also found amongst the *débris*. The groining of the chapels sprang from angle-shafts resting on brackets similar to those at St. David's Cathedral. The angle-shafts had capitals; one fine specimen was found.

In the south chapel next the sacristy were found the remains of two magnificent recessed and canopied altar-tombs, of Decorated work of exceeding beauty, executed in a fine oolitic stone, probably Caen stone. The carving of these tombs was of the greatest delicacy and finish, and of the highest artistic character. Fragments of sculpture found show that each contained an effigy. There were also found two pairs of hands (one evidently a male, the other a female) clasped in the attitude of prayer, and a fragment of the wreath on a helmet, and portions of drapery of a lady's robe. It is, therefore, probable that these were the tombs of a knight and his lady, erected during the latter part of the fourteenth or early in the fifteenth century.

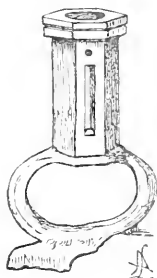
The base of each monument was formed of alabaster panels protected by an iron grille, as the holes still remain in the base-stone where the bars were fixed, and fragments of the alabaster still remain *in situ*. The iron grille would be erected to guard them from injury. The bars have been violently wrenched away.

From fragments of alabaster that have been found in the other chapels there is little doubt that the altars had carved alabaster reredoses of very beautiful design.

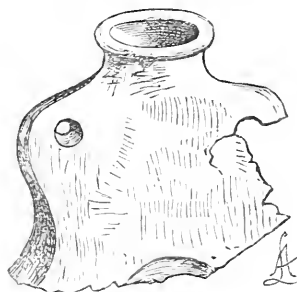
There was also found a carved monk's head in white stone, probably a portion of a figure of St. Bernard,

that may have stood upon a bracket, or it may have formed part of one of the tombs.

In clearing the sacristy, or vestry, a set of gyves or manacles were found, with a lock upon them of



Candlestick.



Pilgrim's Bottle.

very ancient pattern. These may have been used for punishing any refractory inmate of the monastery; or they may be a relic of the occupation by Henry IV's troops, who might have used them to secure their prisoners, but did not think them worth carrying back to England when the occupation of the monastery as a military post ceased.

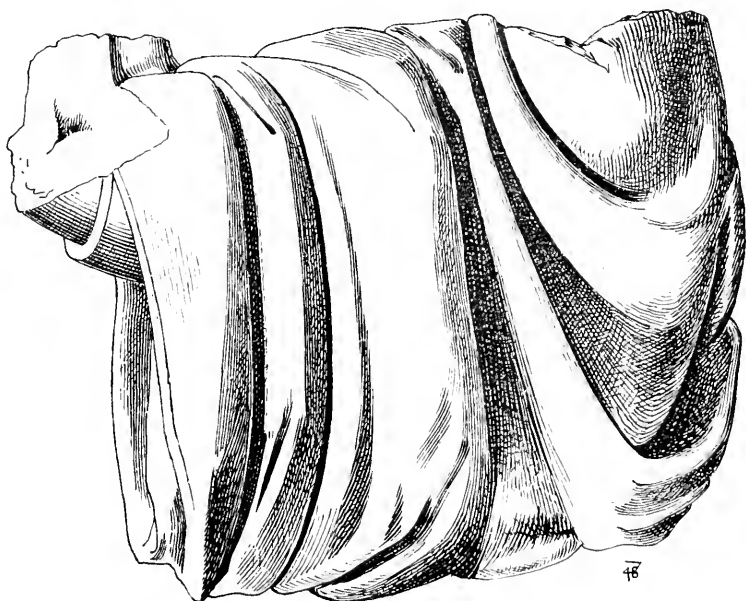
Amongst the *débris* have been found a good many fragments of mediæval pottery; three spurs, two evidently of the early part of the fifteenth century, the



Door-latch.

other one of later date; and a quantity of fragments of glass bottles of the seventeenth century, relics of the occupation of the abbey by the Stedman family. These will be placed in the museum which it is hoped will be constructed out of the sacristy, and where the finer specimens of carving will be deposited.

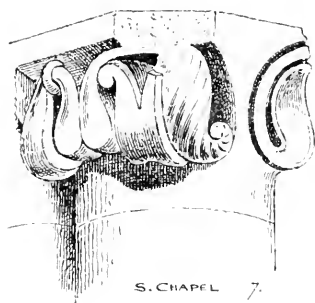
As to the ritual arrangements of the abbey church,



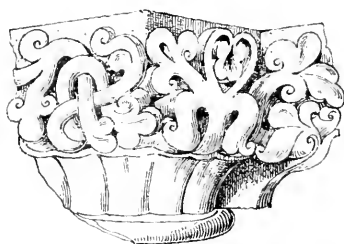




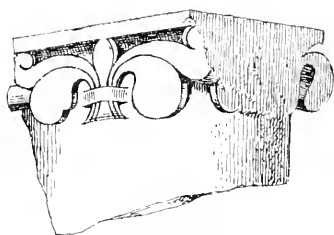




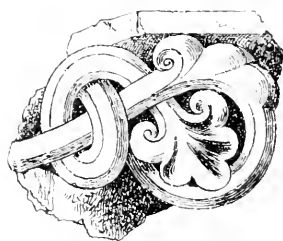
S. CHAPEL 7.



N. CHAPEL 8



CHAPEL ARCADE 9.



CHAPEL 10

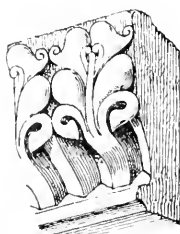


11

CHAPELS



12



13



14



15

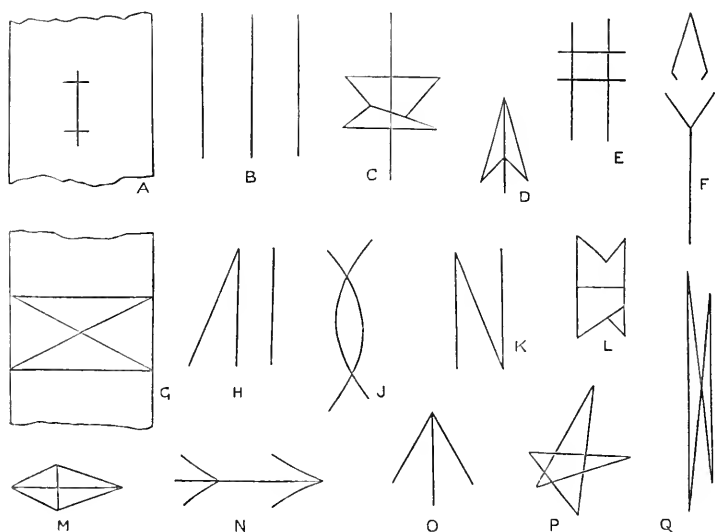
the monks' choir extended (as shown on the plan) from the pulpitum eastward to the eastern arch of the central tower, the transepts were shut off with walls, and there were doors leading from the transepts into the monks' choir, the rebates for which were cut in the piers of the tower. There are traces of screens in front of all the chapels, and separating the north and south aisles from the transepts.

Many of these ritual arrangements were of subsequent date to the original foundation. Originally the church throughout was of one level, with only one, or at most two, steps to the presbytery. At a later date the floor of the presbytery has been raised, concealing the angle-shafts at the east end, the bases of which were discovered in 1887. It is not impossible that some very late alteration took place in the presbytery, for at the east end, in rear of the high altar, and for some distance westward thereof, common 9-inch square red and black tile paving of inferior quality has been laid, covering up the original pavement; and the people who laid this floor actually took up and covered some of the encaustic tiles in doing so.

There is a tradition that the abbey church was used up to the time of the civil war between Charles I and the Parliament as the parish church, and this pavement and the footpace may be of post-Reformation date. During the civil wars the final destruction took place, Strata Florida Abbey then became a ruin, and gradually crumbled to pieces until nothing remained but shapeless mounds of rubbish encumbered with trees, the growth of years of neglect and decay.

Among the *débris* were found, in considerable quantities, fragments of capitals, bosses, and brackets for angle-shafts, all of the Transitional and Early English period, and displaying certain features which point to a Celtic element, more especially in the peculiar interlacing of the foliage, as if the carver had been accustomed to cutting the interlaced ropework that is so peculiar to Irish and Celtic art, and could not help intro-

ducing the same feeling in his foliage. I think this opens a wide field of inquiry as to who were the workmen that were employed at Strata Florida. They could scarcely be English. Could there have been a school of native carvers in Wales at that time? or did they employ French, Flemish, or Irish masons? No doubt there was at all times a considerable exchange of merchandise between Wales, the Continent, and Ireland. In



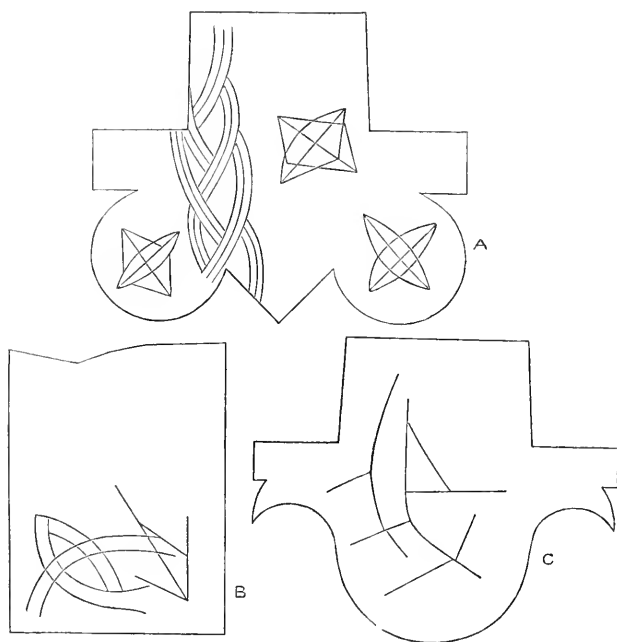
Masons' Marks.

the twelfth and thirteenth centuries England must have been most inaccessible; and the seaports of Cardiganshire in those early days were probably trading centres where Welshmen exchanged their wool and other commodities with the merchants from the Continent and traders from Ireland; and it would be very interesting to compare the work at Strata Florida with some example of similar work in Ireland of that period.

The masons' marks which are found upon the dressed stones throughout the ruins are exceedingly interest-

ing, and more especially the curious interlaced lines traced upon the beds of some of the moulded stonework.

Upon all the mouldings of the arcade-arches are to be seen the lines which were cut upon them to enable the workmen to set their work accurately. The joints of the ashlar masonry are close, and the workmanship is very good. The dimensions are in all cases correct, and so far as I could ascertain, after taking a series of



Masons' Marks.

careful measurements, every dimension was a multiple of some fractional part of the standard foot.

Externally the abbey church of Strata Florida must have been of that simple and stern character which is the characteristic of the humbler ecclesiastical structures of South Wales as compared with those of many other parts of the kingdom. As in the cathedral church of St. David's, while the exterior retains the

sternness of effect which pervades the smaller churches, the interior contains some of the very finest specimens of the transition from Romanesque to early pointed which can anywhere be found. Again, in the cathedral church of Llandaff, the internal architecture ranks among the very finest of the early pointed period. The same is the case at Neath, Margam, Haverfordwest, and in many other instances, and so in a marked degree, so far as we can judge of the fragments that remain, must have been the external appearances of Strata Florida.

Internally it was as rich in its details and its sculpture (for the period at which it was built) as any of the examples quoted, and more particularly in the quality and design of its carved work it excels most, if not all, the examples quoted. The introduction of bands of various-coloured stone in the shafts and arches of the interior, and the painting of the plastered walls, together with the stained glass windows, must have produced a rich and most harmonious effect. The details of the carving show the influence of a distinctly Celtic train of thought; every pattern has more or less a tendency to interlaced work of a somewhat elaborate character; the foliage twists in and out in the most wonderful way, and the spirit and freedom of the work are particularly marked.

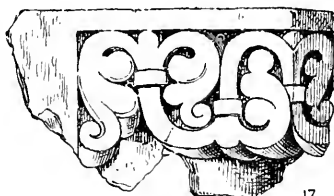
The men who carved the capitals at Strata Florida must have been trained in that Celtic school to whom we owe the magnificent tenth century wayside crosses, which still stand at Nevern and Carew in Pembrokeshire, at Golden Grove in Carmarthenshire, and in the churchyard of Llantwit Major in Glamorganshire.

At Strata Florida we also notice the same peculiarity of interlaced work in the head-stones in the monks' cemetery, discovered at the south-east angle of the church; the dressing of these stones and their general character show that they are probably all of the latter part of the twelfth century, but the interlaced work is evidently a survival of an older style of ornament, such

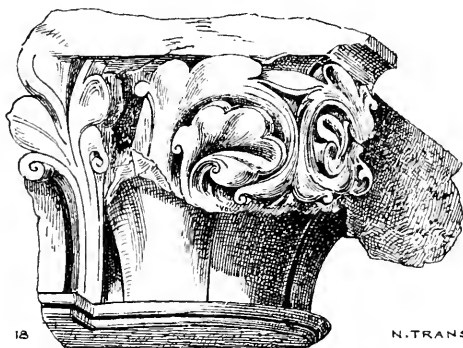


16

N. TRANSEPT



17

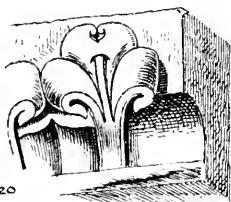


18

N. TRANSEPT

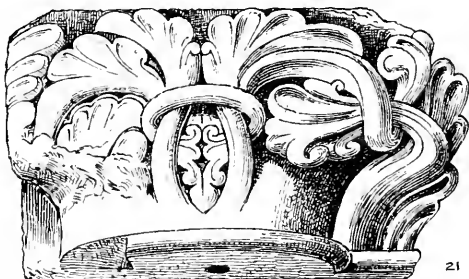


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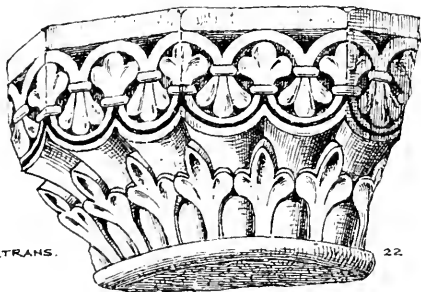


20

N. TRANSEPT

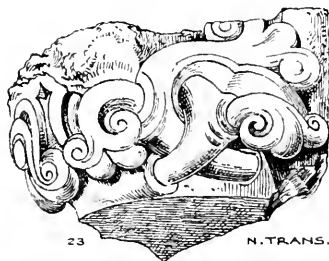


21



S. TRANS.

22



23

N. TRANS.





as we see in its perfection in the celebrated Book of Kells, and in the Irish stone crosses of the period of that book.

This resemblance to Irish carving and to Irish architecture at Strata Florida is very marked in a variety of ways, more especially in the western doorway, where the mouldings of the jambs run right round the arch without any capitals, but with bands set at intervals round both the jambs and the arch; this is a very distinctive detail in Irish doorways of a similar period.

If not Irish, it is Welsh in the strictest sense, as something of a similar character may be observed in the grand doorways of Llanaber and Llanbadarn Fawr, also in one in Llangollen Church. Strata Florida was founded by Welshmen, and its style is quite different in many respects both from the ordinary English style and from that which the Anglo-Norman lords of Glamorgan and Pembroke imported from Somersetshire into South Wales. It resembles this last in a fondness for square and octagonal abaci, but it has not the same general feeling, nor does it present the same sort of capitals; and only to a certain extent in the mouldings of the great west window, and some external mouldings found near the east window, do we find the characteristic ogee keel moulding. Instead of this, the tendency of the Welsh style is to numerous round bowtels, sometimes filleted.

Strata Florida and Llanbadarn Fawr in Cardiganshire, Llanaber and Cymmer in Merionethshire, Valle Crucis and Llangollen in Denbighshire, are buildings which exhibit portions of this style; and in some of the border churches of Shropshire and Herefordshire there are Norman doorways where there is a manifest tendency to continue the shaft in the arch.

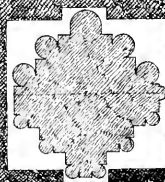
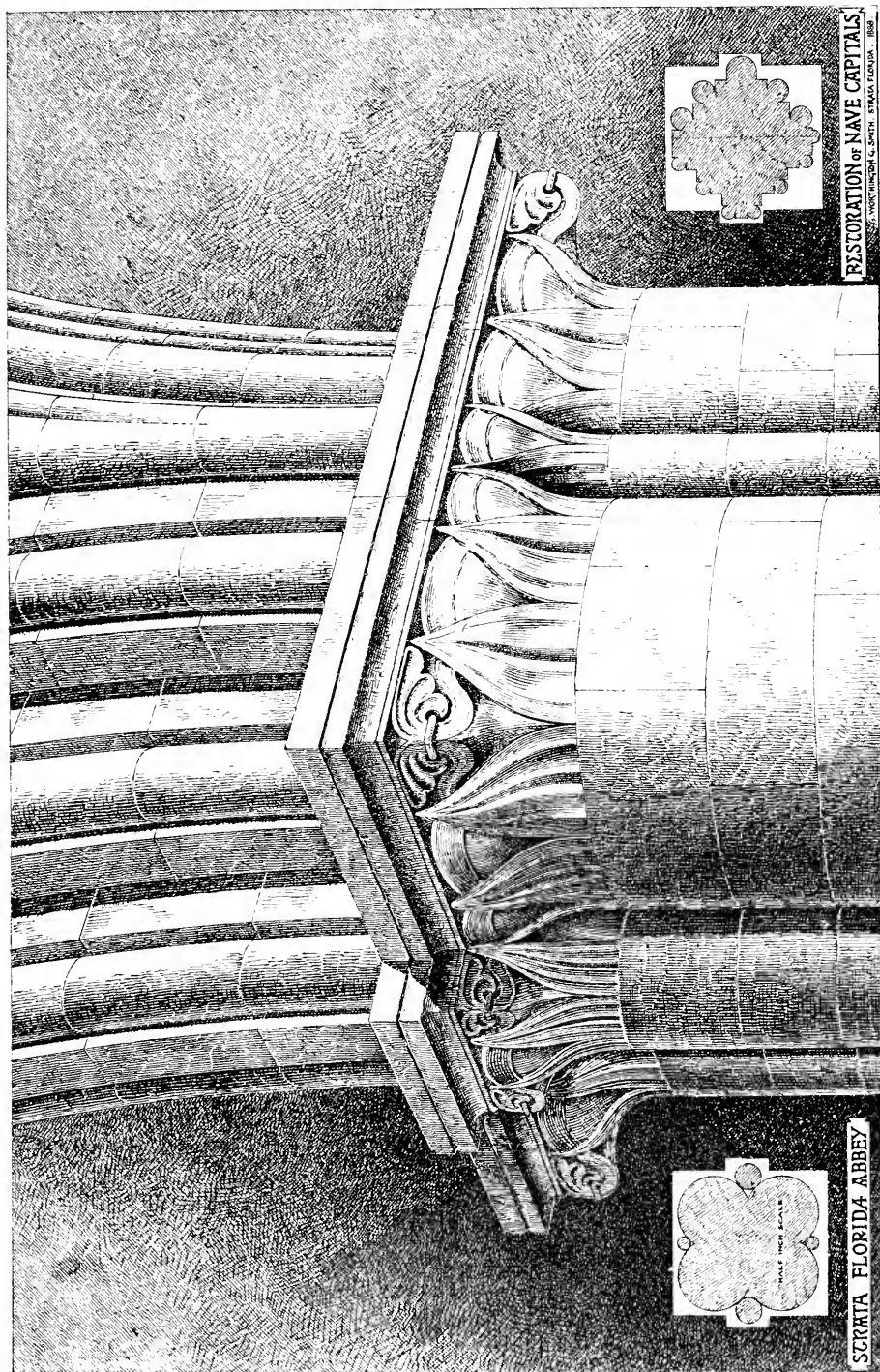
The fragments of wall that are still standing tell us clearly the method of building adopted by the monks; there are, at the height of about 4 feet between each tier, a regular series of what builders call "putlog

holes" going right through the walls, and it is very evident that the system adopted was to have square logs of timber passed through these "putlog holes" upon which planks were placed as a scaffold, and when the masons built the wall as far as they could conveniently reach they then inserted another lot of "putlog holes", and then drawing out the bearers, they proceeded to raise the wall another stage, thus avoiding the use of scaffold-poles. The "putlog holes" were not closed, but left open, and thus the monks could at any time repair any portion of their walls without going to the expense of erecting a costly scaffolding.

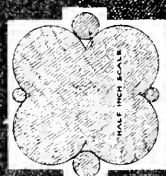
The very rough manner in which the rubble work of the walls was built—and which, with the "putlog holes", is shown very clearly in the admirable drawing by Mr. W. G. Smith of the west doorway (Frontispiece)—leads us to suppose that the building originally was covered externally with rough cast or plaster; the stonework of the walls is set in mortar of the worst possible description, lime being evidently scarce and very costly; internally it was undoubtedly well and carefully plastered, the plasterer's work before the date of the fire in 1284 being of very good quality, that of a subsequent date, which obliterated the decorated and painted walls in the chapels, being of much coarser workmanship.

The place where the lime was burnt can still be seen; it lies in a small plantation on the side of the road leading to Pantyfedwen, a short distance from the abbey, where there is a deep, conical depression in the ground, the bottom of it containing fragments of lime and charcoal.

One of the most striking features at Strata Florida was the nave-arcades, and an attempt has been made to reproduce the appearance these must have presented when perfect, the data for the drawing being the western respond of the south arcade—which, most fortunately, remains intact for a height of several feet above the base—and the masses of fallen arches, shafts,



RESTORATION OF NAVE CAPITALS.  
BY WASHINGTON G. SMITH. ST. FLORIDA, FLORIDA. 1886.

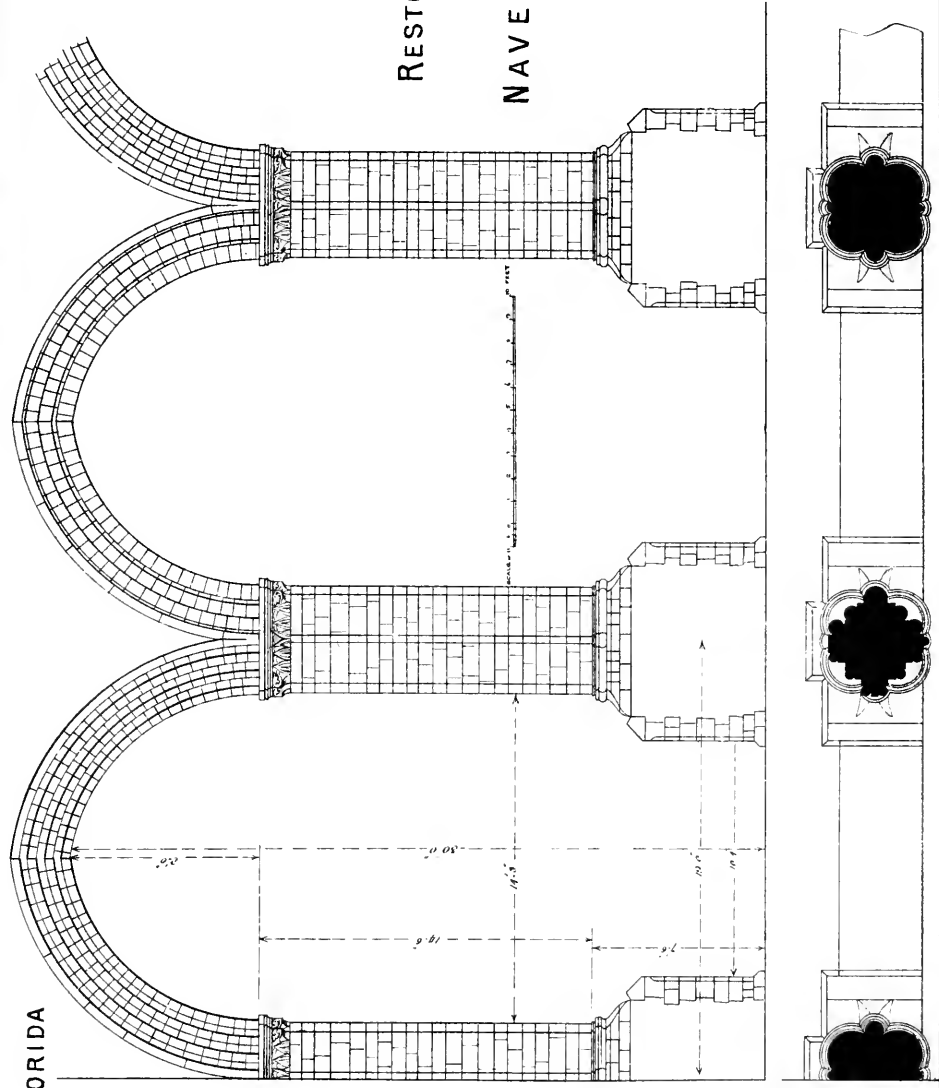


SANTA FLORIDA ABBEY



STRATA FLORIDA  
ABBAY

RESTORATION  
OF  
NAVE ARCADE





and capitals which, though in a very fragmentary condition, were found lying amid the *débris* just as they had fallen outwards when they crumbled into ruin.

The excavations at Strata Florida have shown pretty clearly the course of gradual destruction which overtook this once beautiful building at the dissolution, or, at any rate, soon after. The first symptoms of decay would commence by the stripping of the roof, the tiles falling on to the floor; then the timber would go, some would be carried away, the remainder decaying; then the walls, being deprived of their covering, year after year they tumbled into heaps, until but little was left in the course of 250 or 300 years but grass-grown, shapeless mounds of *débris*, burying almost the entire building.

This course of destruction was doubtless greatly aided by the carrying away of the freestone quoins, which the neighbouring landowners greedily coveted, there being a complete absence of any freestone in Cardiganshire; and it has been suggested that much of the sandstone was carried away to grind up by the farmers' wives for cleaning their wooden platters, as was certainly done in the case of ruined buildings in other parts of Wales.

There still remains much to be done by way of excavating and clearing the ruins of Strata Florida Abbey, and it would therefore be premature to discuss the position of the various conventual buildings which such an establishment possessed in its best days. So far as it has been possible to make out some of the surroundings, it would appear that the abbey mill was situated in the south-eastern angle of the field at the back of the present farm-house, and that there was a water-wheel, a mill-pond, and a leet from the small river Glasffrwd, the course of which can still be traced. The drainage of the abbey was carried to the river Teifi by a sewer 2 ft. wide by 3 ft. high, constructed in stone, and it was flushed by passing through it the water from the mill-race. The water-supply was carried

from an excellent spring of water, called “*Dyffryn Tawel*”, rising out of the rock near the lime-kiln, by means of a lead-pipe, portions of which, from time to time, have been taken up. The pipe was 4 inches in diameter, and from three-eighths to half an inch thick.

There can be no doubt that the monks worked the lead-mines in the immediate vicinity of the abbey, as there was found in the present roadway near the river Teifi the bottom of a furnace where lead had been smelted; and in the fields surrounding the abbey are traces of other smelting places, and pieces of scorixæ are found scattered about in all directions. They also understood the art of extracting the silver which is found (sometimes in very paying quantities) in the Cardiganshire lead ore. I have had an assay made of some of the lead found in the ruins, and it contains the merest trace of silver, not more than would be found in a sample of lead of the present day.

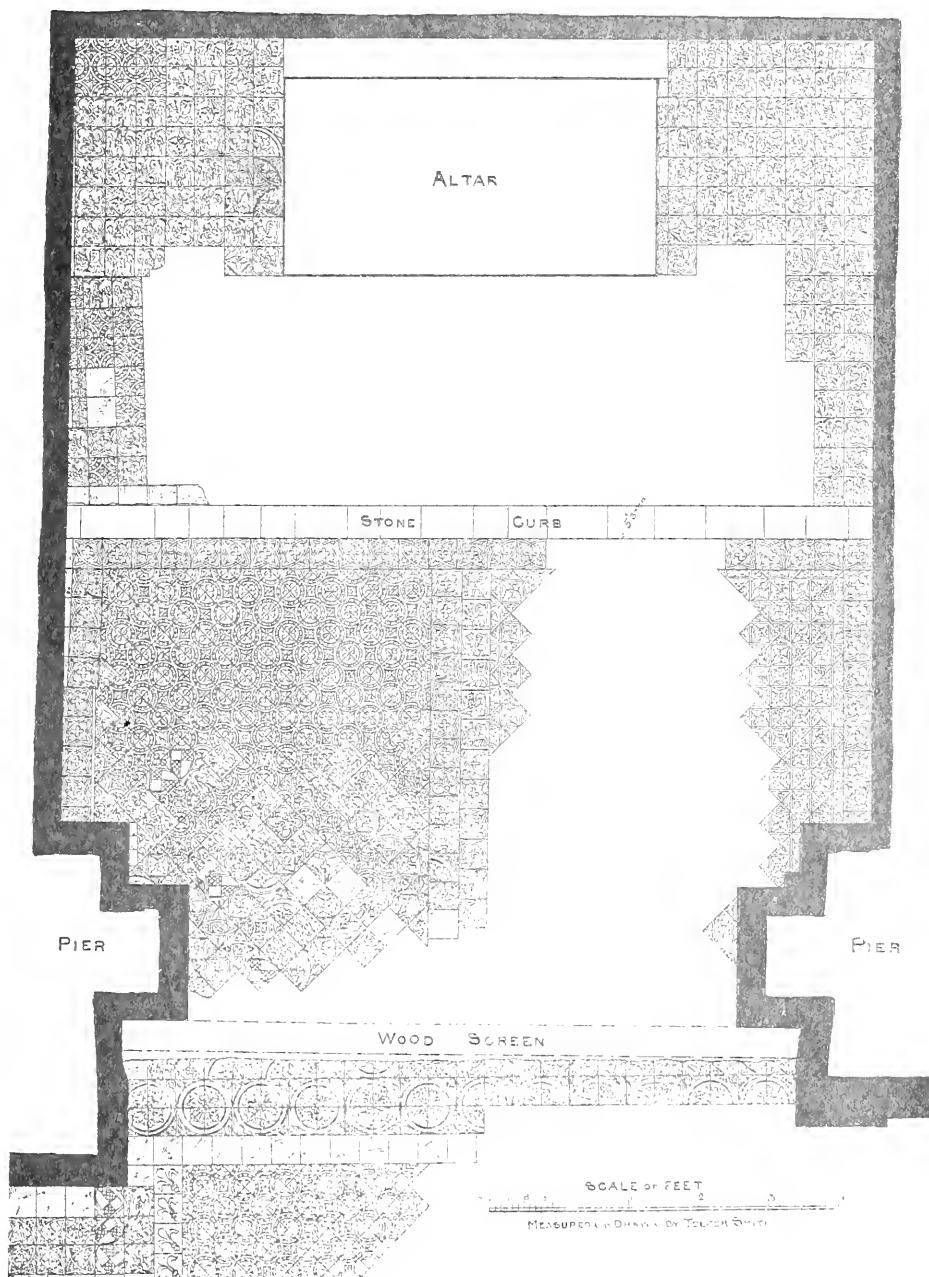
Where the present stack-yard and farm buildings now stand were the pleasure-ground, orchard, and garden of the abbey referred to in the valuation and leases. Many years ago there were some very ancient box-trees growing on this part of the site; on the high ground to the eastward there are traces of ancient cultivation, and in the field to the southward was situated the farm buildings of the abbey. The traces of fire in every part of this field indicate the conflagrations of the time of Edward I, and possibly the burning of the outbuildings in the time of the rebellion of Owain Glendower; the soldiers of Henry IV would scarcely have stabled their horses in the church, if the outbuildings of the monastery had not been destroyed. They were very extensive, for a large space of ground has been covered with buildings, many of the foundations having been cleared away by the present tenant, Mr. Arch, from whom I have obtained much interesting information in connection with this matter, and who has taken a most intelligent interest in the excavations.

There are some remains of the conventual buildings



# STRATA FLORIDA ABBEY

## TILE PAVING IN NORTH CHAPEL. SOUTH TRANSEPT

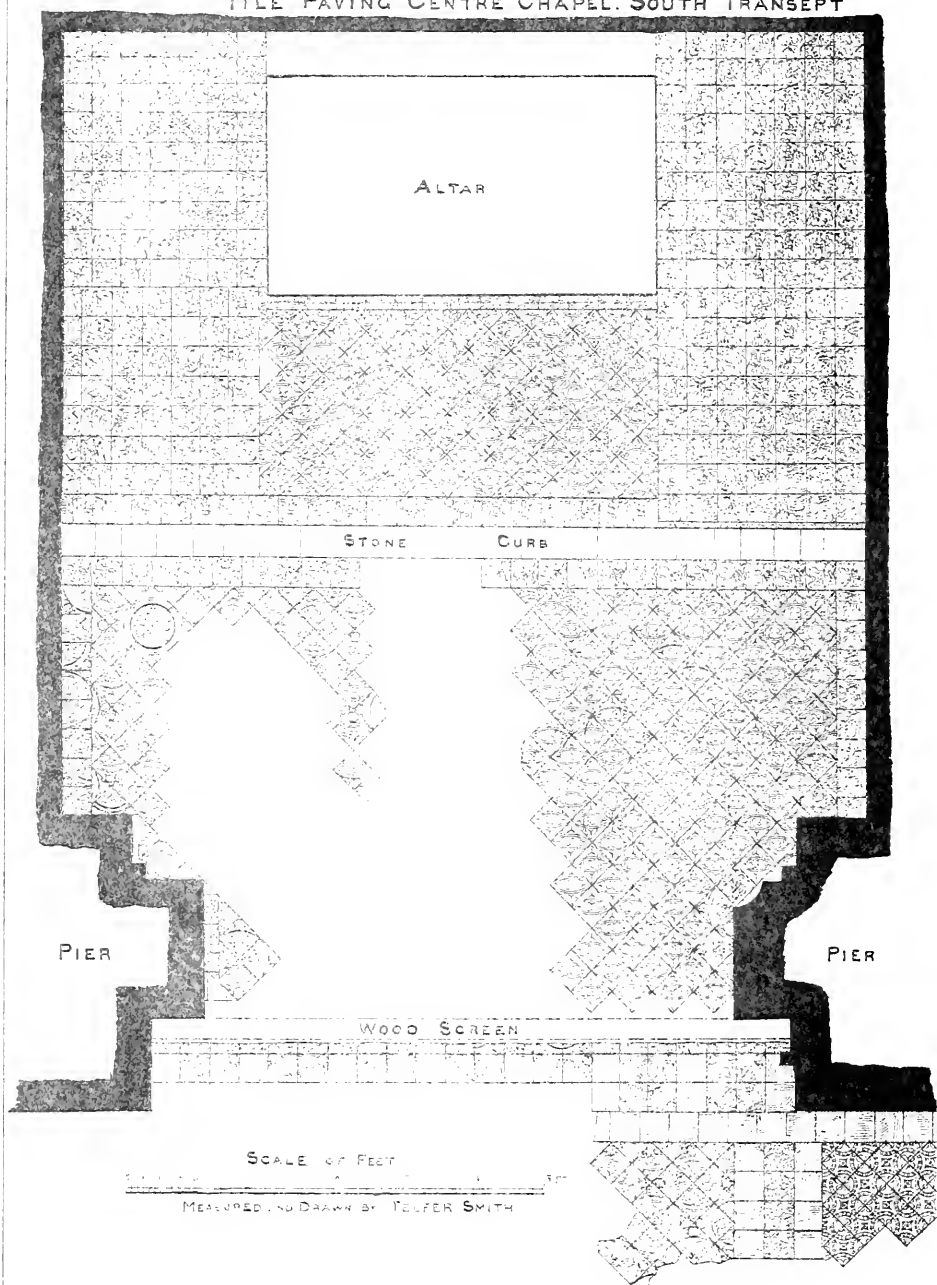






# STRATA FLORIDA ABBEY

## TILE PAVING CENTRE CHAPEL. SOUTH TRANSEPT



still standing adjoining to the west wall of the church and on the south side of the cloister-garth; it is a portion of the cellarium, and there is still in existence the remains of a beam indicating the level of the floor of the dormer of the conversi, and a cross-wall, in the upper portion of which was an aumbry. There are some fragments of walls in the south-western angle of the south aisle which seem to indicate that here was the staircase which led from the dormer of the conversi direct into the church.

I am informed by Dr. Fairbank, F.S.A., that there is a staircase of this kind at Roche Abbey, in Yorkshire; and, from a photograph which he has sent me of the staircase at Roche, I am inclined to believe that a very similar arrangement existed at Strata Florida.

The encaustic and incised tile pavements in the abbey church of Strata Florida are one of the most important discoveries made during the course of the excavations, for, though single tiles are common enough, undisturbed ancient pavements are rare.

Since writing the earlier portion of this chapter, I have submitted the drawings of the pavements and tiles to the Lord Bishop of Ely and the Rev. A. S. Porter, F.S.A., both of whom are authorities on the subject of ancient tiles, and I am indebted to them for the following remarks. The Bishop of Ely is of opinion that the tiles numbered 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 10, 14, 15, and 17 should be classed together; and that Nos. 6, 11, 12, 13, and 16 form another class, in which he would include No. 9. He considers that Nos. 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 11, 13, and 16 are of one date and of one manufacture, as they are portions of the pavements of the three chapels in the south transept which are undisturbed, and that No. 3 ought to fix the period of the manufacture of these tiles. There can be little doubt that the costume of the figure upon the tile No. 3 prevailed about the middle of the fourteenth century. The Bishop identifies No. 6 with a tile from

Acton Scott Church, in Shropshire, and at Barrow, near Broseley; and he also states that "No. 16 occurs at Barrow, and a tile of substantially the same design, but not identical, at Tong Church, Salop." In the Cathedral of St. Asaph and at Barrow occurs what he supposes to be No. 13; but in those examples four small rings appear round the central portion. He also mentions a tile from Chester in the British Museum rather like No. 11, but with a small rose in the centre instead of the quatrefoil, and recognises Nos. 3 and 9 as not uncommon patterns. "Nos. 1 and 4 are of a design common to all dates, and No. 2 is also an ordinary subject, but seldom with a mere bar up the middle. There is nothing remarkable in the armorial tile 5; the frame of the cockatrice in 7 is common enough; 8 is unusual, but not remarkable; 10 is a curious variation of a form of 2; 12 a common enough type"; but the Bishop has not seen this particular example. "14 is the corner of a square of sixteen tiles; 15 possibly the centre of same square; 17 a border-tile of Decorated date, or perhaps Perpendicular."

The Rev. A. S. Porter, F.S.A., says: "It is difficult to form an exact opinion about the Strata Florida tiles without actually seeing one: but so far as I can judge they were not made at either Great Malvern or Droitwich, which were the two places where our Worcestershire tiles were made. So far as I can judge from the drawings, they belong (especially those which have apparently incised lines upon them) to the Shropshire type, of which examples may be seen at Holy Cross, Shrewsbury, Cound, Chester (Cathedral and Museum), and also at the Museum at Warwick. I do not know where they were made. I believe there is at Cound, in Shropshire, a tile exactly like the one you figure bearing the Despenser coat, quarterly *or* and *gules*, in the second and third quarters a fret *or*, over all a bend *sable*. Some griffins like those in your illustrations (No. 9) are also to be seen at

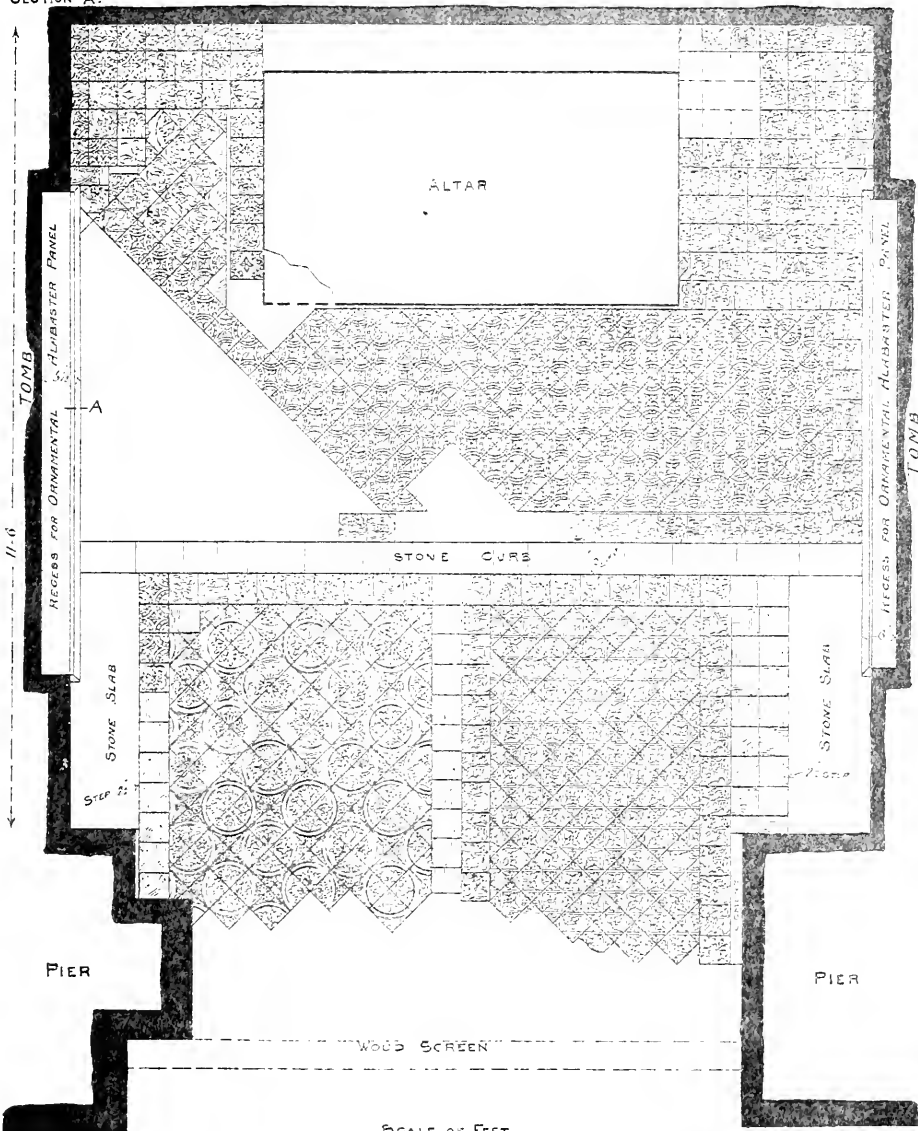
# STRATA FLORIDA ABBEY

## TILE PAVING SOUTH CHAPEL SOUTH TRANSEPT

TILE FLOOR

SECTION A

11'-6"



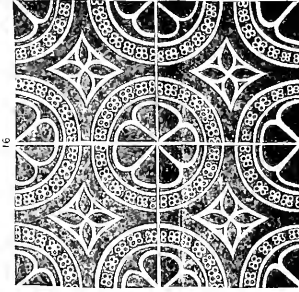
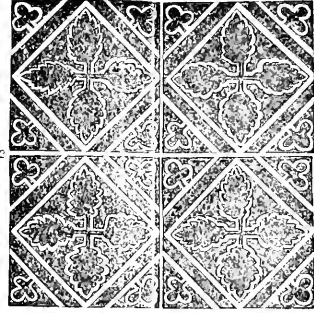
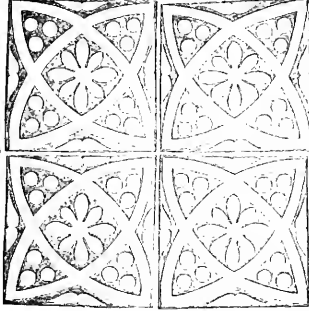
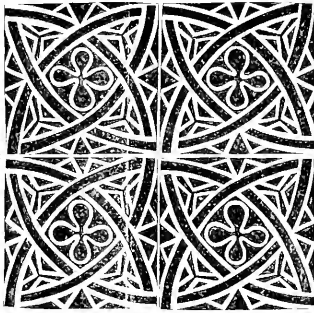
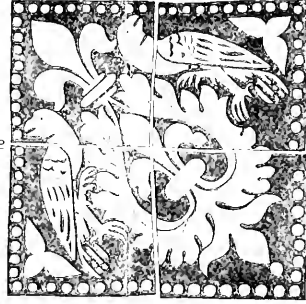
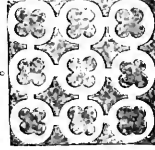
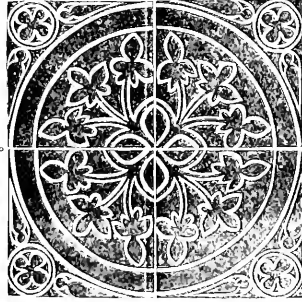
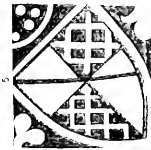
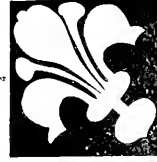
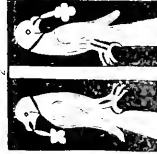
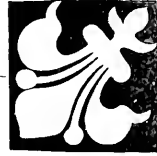
SCALE OF FEET  
0 2 4 6

MEASURED AND DRAWN BY TELFER SMITH









BORDER - 12



# STRATA FLORIDA ABBEY

## PAVEMENT TILES

SIZE 12 INCHES

Cound and also at Holy Cross. I should think that the date of the pavements cannot be earlier than about the middle of the fourteenth century. The Despenser coat must, I think, be referred either to —(1) Hugh le Despenser, eldest son of Hugh Earl of Gloucester, who was summoned to Parliament as Lord of Glamorgan, and died without issue February 8th, 1348; (2) or his nephew, Edward le Despenser, born 1336, made a Knight of the Garter in 1603, and died at Cardiff Castle Nov. 11, 1375."

Mr. Porter also refers to the drawings of the fragments of stained glass found behind the bases of the altars in the chapels in the south transept, illustrated upon the same plate as the pavement tiles. He remarks: "The drawings of the fragments of glass are very interesting. I have gone somewhat carefully into the subject of early English glass, being led thereto by our finding some fragments of the same date in our church here (Claines), and I believe that the pieces you figure were in the windows when the church was burnt by Edward I, and that the glass was made about 1255."

There can be little doubt that Mr. Porter is correct as to this; the glass was nearly all found in the spaces which exist at the rear of the altars in the chapels in the south transept, some portions of it bearing evident marks of the action of fire; fragments of the leading were also discovered with small pieces of coloured glass still attached. The action of time and its burial in damp soil for so long a period has entirely broken up the texture of this glass, and much of it crumbles to powder upon being exposed to the air, so that it is almost impossible to make out more than the merest fragments of the design with which it had been painted.

Having now completed what I fear is but an imperfect history of the Abbey of Strata Florida, and of the excavations made upon its site, I will conclude with an extract from the paper by the Rev. George

Roberts, published in the *Archæologia Cambrensis*, vol. iii, 1848.

“ The history of the Abbey of Strata Florida is not remarkable for stirring incidents ; its walls for many years preserved the chronicles of events as they took place, and guarded the remains of that illustrious family by which it had been founded and endowed. It saw the native princes of Wales assemble within its precincts to assert their liberties and to maintain an independent government ; its abbots were summoned to take their share in their country’s struggles against the invader, sometimes in suffering, in devastation, and burning, sometimes as messengers of peace and reconciliation, as intercessors and mediators between the steeled corselet and mailed hand of the Norman King, and the bare bosom of the British prince. But with the dying freedom of Wales perished also the glory of Strata Florida ; the pen of her monks refused to chronicle the successes and triumphs of the Conqueror ; her altars were no longer frequented by the descendants of those who had raised them ; the rude magnificence of an almost barbaric regal line was no longer displayed at solemn seasons in her holy fane ; she had enough to do to save a remnant of her vast possessions out of the ‘ lion’s mouth’, until, year after year, broad manors and extensive tracts of country were forcibly wrenched out of her grasp ; her influence drooped as her lands and wealth dwindled away ; the reverence of her sanctuary faded from the eyes of a people who pondered sullenly upon their captive and humiliating position, and at last the Reformation found her with seven or eight of her sons feebly and ineffectually watching over the ashes of the mighty princes entrusted to their charge, singing requiems over the graves of those who, dead to fame, dead to memory, and dead to their country’s fate, had once lived to earn reputation by their virtues and heroic deeds ; had once defied the Normans to lay hands upon the Welsh crown, and had themselves sunk to rest before their

country's sun had set in clouds, blood-red with oppression and treachery.

“Then followed the dismal night of ecclesiastical spoliation ; the seven poor old tottering religious men were ejected from their sanctuary ; the mass was left unsung ; the lamp before the altar was extinguished ; the sound of living creatures passed away from the choir and the aisles ; the mountain gust, while it sighed over the mausoleum of British princes, showered down upon their graves a storm of fragments torn from roof, and wall, and buttress ; and thus in centuries of never ceasing decay, the ecclesiastical pile, with all its richness of ornament and elaborate carving, with its shrines and chapels, its paintings and storied windows, its rich furniture, its vessels of silver and gold, its columns, its arches, its fair proportions, its carved stonework and wood-work, has literally vanished from the surface of that ‘blooming plain’ over which it presided as a stately queen. It is as though the genius of Wales had sealed beneath the weight of the abbey’s ruins the sepulchres of her native princes ; as though there should be left no trace either of civil or ecclesiastical grandeur for the future archæologist to meditate upon, and to frame his vision of the past from the skeleton remains of the present ; one solitary arch points out the site of the abbey, but no visible memorial leads the pilgrim’s footsteps to the spot where Rhys ap Gruffydd and his descendants repose in the sanctuary of the dead.”

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## APPENDIX.

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### EXTRACTS, CHARTERS, AND DOCUMENTS CONNECTED WITH THE HISTORY OF STRATA FLORIDA ABBEY.

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*Notices of Strata Florida Abbey in Vol. II of the  
"Myfyrian Archaeology".*

"1166. This year a company of monks, through the permission of God, and the incitement of the Holy Spirit, came to Strata Florida, p. 432.

"1178. Then died Cadell ap Griffith through the affliction of illness, and was buried at Strata Florida, having assumed the religious habit, p. 437.

"1182. This year died David, abbot of Strata Florida; and also Howel ap Jevac, lord of Arwystli, who was buried honourably at Strata Florida, p. 438.

"1183. This year, the monks of Strata Florida came to Redynauc Velen in North Wales, p. 438.

"1203. This year, on the eve of Whitsunday, the monks of Strata Florida went to the new church, which was handsomely built, p. 442.

"1203. In the same year, on the eve of the feast of St. James the apostle, died Griffith ab Rhys at Strata Florida, having assumed the religious habit, and was there buried, p. 442.

"1208. Howel Seis, son of Lord Rhys, was deceitfully stabbed by the men of his brother Maelgon, and from that stabbing died; and was buried at Strata Florida, in the same manner as his brother Griffith, having assumed the religious habit, p. 443.

"1209. Died Mallt Bruce, mother of the sons of Griffith ap Rhys, at Llanbadarn-fawr, and having partaken of the holy communion, and done confession and penance, was buried with her husband at Strata Florida, p. 444.

"1223. Died Rhys Jenane, and was buried at Strata Florida, having performed penance, partaken of the holy communion, and done confession, and assumed the religious habit, p. 454.

"1228. Died Kidivor, abbot of Strata Florida, p. 455.

"1233. Died Maelgon ap Rhys, at Llanerch Aeron, and was buried in the chapter-house at Strata Florida, p. 455.

"1234. Died Owen ap Griffith, at Strata Florida, on the Wednesday after the eighth day of the Epiphany, and was buried with his brother Rhys in the chapter-house of the monks, p. 457.

"1239. On the third day of the feast of St. Luke the evangelist, all the princes of Wales swore fealty to David ap Llewelyn ap Jorwerth, at Strata Florida, p. 457.

"1243. Died Meredith ab Rotbert, chief counsellor of Wales, having assumed the religious habit at Strata Florida, p. 458.

"1247. In the month of July, Griffith, abbot of Strata Florida, made peace with the king, with respect to the debt which the Monastery had for a long time owed, the abbot and monks being forgiven on three hundred and fifty marks being paid, and their paying as much more at specified times, for the Monastery was found able to do it, p. 459.

"1249. The abbots of Strata Florida and of Aberconway obtained, through pressing solicitation, the body of Griffith ap Llewelyn, and brought it with them from London to Aberconway, where it lies, p. 459.

"1250. At the end of the year, died Morgan, son of Lord Rhys, having assumed the religious habit at Strata Florida, p. 460.

"1253. Immediately after the feast of St. John, died Rhys, the only son of Maelgon Jeuane, having taken the religious habit at Strata Florida, p. 460.

"1253. Died Gwenllïan, daughter of Maelgon Jeuane, at Llanvihangel Gelynnot, and was buried at Strata Florida, p. 460.

"1254. Was bought the great bell at Strata Florida for one hundred and nine marks, and was raised to its place, and was consecrated by the bishop of Bangor, p. 460.

"1255. Died Maelgon Jeuane, and was buried at Strata Florida, p. 461.

"1267. Died in the month of March, Meredith ab Owen, at Llanbadarn-fawr, and was buried at Strata Florida, p. 463.

"1269. Died Joab, abbot of Strata Florida, p. 463.

"1270. Died Meredith ap Griffith, lord of Hirvryn, in the castle of Llandovery, on the third day of the feast of St. Lucy the virgin, and was buried at Strata Florida, near his father, p. 464.

"1281. Died Phillip Goch, the thirteenth abbot of Strata Florida, and was succeeded by Eineon Seys; and at that time the Monastery was burnt. Afterwards, on the eve of Candlemas-day, the Bishop of St. David's sang mass at Strata Florida; and that was the first mass which was sung in the diocese, p. 466."



## EXTRACTS FROM LELAND'S "ITINERARY".

*Leland's "Itinerary", vol. v, p. 77.*

"BY rennith a Broke caullid . . . . So passing under a hy Hille side, I saw hard by on the lift Honde a great Fenny More, owt of the wich the Inhabitantes therabout digge Turfes for Fier, and by the same Fenne is a fair LLin cawllid LLinride ii. Miles from *Strateflur*.<sup>1</sup> of sum

caullid bycause . . . . bytwixt it and *Flere* Brokes of sum . . . it stode in the . . . .

"*Strateflure* is set round about with Montanes not far distant, except on the West Parte, where *Diffryn* Tyue is. Many Hilles therabout hath bene well woddid, as evidently by old Rotes apperith, but<sup>2</sup> (now in them is almost no Woode).

"The causses be these<sup>3</sup>; First the Wood cut down was never copisid, and this hath beene a great cause of Destruction of Wood thorough *Wales*. Secondly after cutting down of Woddys the Gottys hath so bytten the young Spring that it never grew but lyke Shrubbess. Thirddely Men for the nonys destroyed the great Woddiss that thei shuld not harborow Theves. The Chirche of *Strateflere* is larg, side ilid and crosse ilid. By is a large Cloyster, the Fraternity and Infirmatori be now mere Ruines. The Coemiteri wherein the Cunteri about doth buri is veri large, and meanely waullid with Stoone. In it be xxxix. great Hue trees. The base Court or Camp afore the Abbey is veri fair and large.

"Thens I went a good half Mile by *Tiue* Vale, and a Mile and a half up the craggy and stoni Montaines to *LLin Tiue*,<sup>5</sup>

passing over *Ciurdwy* and ii. Miles beyound<sup>4</sup> hit to *Cregnaulin*. If I had goone from thens a Mile of to a hy Hille I might have sene *Penlinmon*, then distant a .v. Miles. The Hilles betwyxt *LLinne*,<sup>6</sup> *Tyue*, and *Cragnaugllin* were not in sight so stony as the Hilles betwyxt<sup>7</sup> *Stratfler* and *LLin Tyue*.

<sup>a</sup> *Voces supra lin. desunt*, in *St.* and *B.*

<sup>1</sup> These broken words in the marg. are wanting in *St.* and *B.*

<sup>2</sup> "(Now in them is) almoste no Wood."

<sup>3</sup> "Be thes."

<sup>4</sup> "Chrich."

<sup>6</sup> "Llinne Tyue an Cragnaugllin."

<sup>5</sup> "Llin Tyue."

<sup>7</sup> Bytwix."

"I standing on Craggenaugllin saw in no Place within sight no Wood but al Hilly Pastures. From *Strateflere* I roode by rank, hylli and valley Pastures a ii *Walsche* Miles, and so passing over *Maknant* a wild Brooke renning on Rokkes, and a nother whose Name I remember not, cam to the thirde caullid *Nantllys*, and thirby on the right Hond I saw an Hille caullid *Crag John*, and so over *Melewen* River that therby in sight went ynto *Ustwith* River.

"Or I cam to *Melewen* I had riden be<sup>1</sup> the space of a iii. Miles in *Comenstwith*.

"From *Melewen* I enterid to the Valley of *Ustwith*, so narrowly with Rokky *Montaines* enclosid, that in Wynter the streame occupieth al the Botom of the Valley.

"First entering this Botom I saw on the right Hond an Hille caullid *Menitheny*.<sup>2</sup>

#### Toward *Cregnaullin*.

"The first River be side *Tyue* that I passid over was *Clardue*, that is to say *Blak Clare*, no great Streame but cumming thorough Cragges. In the farther side of hit I saw ii. veri poore Cotagis for Somer Dayres for Catel. and hard by were ii. Hilletes, thorough the wich *Clarduy* passith, wher they fable that a Gigant striding was wont to wasch his Hondes, and that *Arture* killid hym. The Dwellers say also that the Gigant was buried therby, and shew the Place.

"*Clarduy* (*White Clar*) risith about half a mile from that Place in a Mares,<sup>a</sup> and rennyng ii. *Walsch* Milys in al goith into *Clarwen*. *Clarwen* risith in a Valley not far from *LLinyngin Velen*, that is a good Mile from *Cargnaullinn*. After that *Clarwen* hath receivid *Clarduy* he remnith a iii. Miles or he cum into *Alen* River, far bigger River then other of ther<sup>b</sup> of the *Clars*.

"*Alen* River risith in the blain or upper Part of *Comenstwith* in *Cairdiganshire*, and renning iii. *Walsch* Miles cummith into *Owy*, caullid in *Englisch Wy*, a litle beneth *Rathergoury*, a Market Toun yn *Comenstwith*. It is caullid *Rather Owy* because it stondith on *Wy* River. But or ever I cam to *Clarduy*, that is about a iii Mile from *Ystradfler*, I passid *per Montes praeruptos*, *per paludes* & *invia Saxa*, and cam to *LLin Tyue*, the wich is in Cumpace a iii Quarters of a Mile, being ii. Miles be East from *Strateflere*.

"It is fedde fro hyer Places with a litle Broket, and issueth

<sup>a</sup> Marishe, *St.*

<sup>b</sup> Them for her in *St.* Of ther are wanting in Burton.

<sup>1</sup> "Bi the."

<sup>2</sup> "Menithduy, *St.*"

out againe by a smaulle Gut. Ther is in it veri good Trouttes and Elys, and noe other Fisch.

"From *Clarduy* to *Cragnaullin* is a good mile by Est, and standing by a Stone on the Top of this Hille I saw v. Poolis by South<sup>1</sup> West, whereof the biggest is *LLin*<sup>2</sup> *Heligna*, shorter<sup>a</sup> *Lignante*, having no other Fisch but Trouttes and Elys. One side of the Poole,<sup>3</sup> that is the South Side, hath Trouttes as redde as Salmon. The West Side hath white, as likewise hath *LLin Tyue*. This Pole is seene to be fedde with no Brooke, and hath a Brooke issuing out of hym of his oune Name, and cummith into *Tyue* in the West Side of *Tyue* half a mile above *Stratfler*.

"*LLinnher*, i. *longus lacus*, for it is iii. Quarters of a Mile in lenght, having no great Bredthe, nor Issue of Brok. owt of hit, but plentiful of Trouttes and Elys. *LLinn Gorlan* hath no Issue, but berith Elys and Trouttes.

"*LLingronn* hath an Issue, and semid to me hard yoinid to *LLin Gorlan*.

"*LLin Tyue* the fite apperid also from *Cragnaulin*, but distant about a mile from the other iiiii. Nere about the *Cragnaulin* Stone apperid other iii Pollis.

"*LLin Veryddon Vaur* havynug Trouttes and Elis but no Broke cumming into hit or going owt.

"*LLinn*<sup>4</sup> *Veryddon Vehan* having Trouttes and Elys, but no Brok cumming into hit or going owt.

"*Dinduy*,<sup>5</sup> i.e., *lacus niger*, even under the Botom of the Hille Side, having Trouttes and Elys, but no Broke cumming into hit or going oute.

"*LLinyvigin Velin* that is a Mile from the Stone by South West. *Ynigin* is to say a quaking More. *Velen* is yelow of the Color of the Mosse and corrupt Gresse about hit.

"Of al these Pooles none stondith in so rokky and stony Soile as *Tyue* doth, that hath also withyn hym many Stonis.

"The Ground al about *Tyue*, and a great Mile of toward *Stratfler* is horrible with the sighte of bare Stones, as *Cregeryri* Montaines be.

"*LLinne*.

"*LLinnllanabeder*<sup>6</sup> (*Lacus Petrinus*) within half a mile of *LLanbeder*, having Trouttes and Elys.

<sup>a</sup> Short, *St.* and *B.*

<sup>1</sup> "South Weste."

<sup>2</sup> "Llinn Helignant, *St.*"

<sup>3</sup> "Linn."

<sup>6</sup> "Llinllanabeder."

<sup>3</sup> "Pooles."

<sup>5</sup> *Dinduy*] *L. Linduy*.

<sup>th</sup>  
 “*LLinnyrydde*<sup>1</sup> having Trouttes and Elys [standinge by a great Few<sup>2</sup> on themia wos, it wy].  
 .....a

“These iiii. Poles be in the Lordship of *Pennarth* longging to the principal of the *Hoghans*. The chefe Toun of this Lordship being in *Cairdiganshire* is *Tregaron*.<sup>ch</sup> But the Abbate of *Strateflere* hath much Landes in the same Lordship, and thes iii. Pooles longe to the Abbat of *Stratflere*.

“*LLin Yridde*, ii. Miles from *Strateflere* owt of whom goith a little Issue or Broket. I writ of this afore.

“*LLinyeregnant*, a bigge Poole veri ful of Trouttes and Elys. It is from *Strateflur* a iii. by West toward *LLanandennay*.

“*LLinneduy*, i. *lacus niger*, very deape and ful of Trouttes and Elys. It is iii. Miles by South from *Strateflur* toward *Buelth* Lordshippe.

“*LLinnygorres*,<sup>3</sup> not ii. Miles from *LLinduy*. *Gorsse* in *Walsche*, a *Myer* in *Englische*. It hath Trouttes and Elys.

“Al thes that be byfore save *LLinn LLanabeder*, and al these that folow long to the Abbat of *Strateflere*.

“*LLinn gynon* apou a hy Montaine iiii. Miles from *Strateflure* by South West, having Trouttes and Elys, and a little Issue owt of hit, and goith into the Broket that cummith owt of *LLin Helignant*.

<sup>th</sup>  
 “*LLinn Creg lloydon*, v. Myles or vi. from *Stratfler* toward *Poymland*. It hath an Issue that goith into *Elan* or *Alan* Water, that goith into *Wy*.

“*LLin Winge* is almost yoinid to *LLinnereglloydon*, but it hath no Issue.

“The River of *Alan* in the next part of hit is viii Miles from *Strateflere*, and ther parteth *Cairdiganshire* from the Lordship of *Rather* or *Comemytother*. *Rather* is the chefe Toun yn *Comytother*.

“Al the Montaine ground bytwixt *Alen* and *Strateflure* longgeth to *Strateflure*, and is almoste for wilde Pastures and Breding

<sup>a</sup> I have put points under these words, which I took from Stowe, because they are corrupted. In B. they are read thus: “in the middle way betwixt . . . bitwix.”

<sup>1</sup> “*Linnyrydde*—standing by a great Few yn . . . bitwix.”

<sup>2</sup> “*Fenn*,” *St*.

<sup>3</sup> “*Linnygorres*.”

Grounde, in so much that everi Man there about puttith in<sup>1</sup> Bestes as many as they wylle without payng of Mony.

“From *Stratefler* toward *Lanandeucri* is xviii. Miles, of the wich xii. Miles of Montain Grounde, partely Pasture Soyle partely longgith<sup>a</sup> to *Strateflere*, and ther about partith *Cairdiganshire* from *Cairmardineshire*. For therby hath *Stratefler* a Graunge caullid *Nantbay* in *Cairmardineshire*. *Strateflur* is xx. *Walsch* Miles from *Mahenclif*, and al the Soile bytwyxt is Montanius ful of Pasture for a xvi. Miles, but within a iiij. Myles of *Mahen*<sup>2</sup> Wooddy.

“From *Stratefler* to *LLangyric* (fanum Cyriaci) xii. Miles. *LLangyrik* is in *Arustecley* Lordship in *Poisland*. *Wy* renning therby devidith *Cairdiganshire* from *Powislande*. Of these xii. Miles viii be Montainous Ground longging to *Stratefler*, al for pasture.

“Betwixt *Stratefler* and *Buelth*<sup>b</sup> Toun xvi. of thes be vi. in *Cairdiganshire*, the wich<sup>c</sup> the wiche *Towe* River devidith from *Cairdiganshire*. Al this vi. Miles is Montayne ground for Pasture, and longgith to *Strateflure* Abbay, but the Pastures of thes Hilles be fre to the Inhabitanthes, as well as al other montaine Pasture longging to *Strateflere*.

“The Pastures of the Montaynes of *Cairdiganshire* be so great that the hunderith part of hit rottith on the ground, and maketh Sogges and Quikke More by long Continuance for lak of Eting of hit.”

EXTRACTS FROM TANNER'S "NOTITIA MONASTICA" AND  
DUGDALE'S "MONASTICON".

"*Notitia Monastica*. (Tanner.) Cardiganshire.

"VII. Strata Florida, Stratflur, Stratflour, or Istradfleet.<sup>d</sup>

"CISTERTIAN ABBEY. Rhesus, son of Griffith,<sup>e</sup> prince of South Wales, built and endowed an abbey here, A.D. 1164<sup>f</sup> for Cister-

<sup>a</sup> "Sic."

<sup>b</sup> "*Buelth* Lordship and Toun 16. miles. Of these 6 be in *Cairdiganshire*, etc."

<sup>c</sup> *Redundant*.

<sup>d</sup> Speed's map.

<sup>e</sup> "So expressly in the confirmation of this foundation, in *Mon. Angl.*, vol. i, p. 893. But Leland, *Collect.*, vol. i, p. 45, saith 'Rhesus filius Theodori princeps Suth Walliæ primus fundator'."

<sup>f</sup> "So *Mon. Angl.*, vol. i, p. 893, but in pat. 3 Hen. 6 it is said to have been founded A.D. 1180."

<sup>1</sup> "On Bestes."

<sup>2</sup> "Mahencliffe, B. Mahendi, St."

tian<sup>a</sup> Monks, which was burnt down about 1294<sup>b</sup> in the wars of K. Edward I with the Welsh. But being soon rebuilt it flourished till the dissolution, about which time its revenues were valued at £118 7s. 3d. *per. ann.* as Dugdale, and £122 6s. 8d. as Speed.”<sup>c</sup>

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*Extract from Dugdale's "Monasticon Anglicorum", vol. i, p. 632, edited by John Cayley, Sir Henry Ellis, and Rev. Bulkeley Bandinel, A.D. 1846.*

“Strata Florida, or Stratfleur Abbey in Cardiganshire. Bishop Tanner calls this monastery Strata Florida, Stratflur, Stratflour, and Stradfleet. It was built and endowed by Rhesus or Rhees, the son of Griffith, Prince of South Wales,

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<sup>a</sup> “The *Monasticon* placeth them amongst the *Cistertians*, and Leland, *Itin.*, vol. v, p. 15. But Camden, in *Cardiganshire*, calls them *Cluniacs*.”

<sup>b</sup> “*Mon. Angl.*, vol. i, p. 894. It was injured by the wars before, and then the king paid them £78 for damages. Willis’ *St. Asaph*, p. 159.

“*Vide* in *Mon. Angl.*, tom. 1, p. 893, cartam 10 Ed. 3, m. 6, n. 9, recit. Resi fundatoris dotationem, et R. Hen. 2.

“Confirmationem istius dotationis, p. 894, pat. 28, Ed. 1, m. 23, pro readificatione abbatiæ post combustionem.

“Lelandi, *Collect.*, vol. i, p. 45.

“Leland, *Itin.*, vol. v, pp. 15, 82; vol. vii, p. 19, of the buildings and some of the possessions of this abbey.

“In Willis’ *Survey* of the cathedral church of St. Asaph, p. 179, of the abbat’s grange at Abermixt and Glamok.

“In *Bibl. Harleiana*, ms. 6068, f. 10, 11, diversas cartas.

“Monachis de Stratfleur concessa.

“An account of the lands belonging to this abbey.

“Penes Thomam vicecom. Weymouth.

“Cart. 1, Joan, p. 2, m. 15, n. 97, 98.

“Cart. 14, Ed. 2, p. 1, m. 6.

“Pat. 1, Ric. 2, p. 1, m. 19, Pat. 4, Ric. 2, p. 1, m. 13.

“Pat. 3 Hen. 6, p. 2, m. 5, Pat. 23, Hen. 6,<sup>1</sup> p. 2, m. 28.”

<sup>c</sup> “The Buet College MS. saith, seven monks at Stratflour; but the prior and seven Religious had pensions A.D. 1553. Willis’ *Abbies*, vol. ii, p. 311. This abbey is valued at £1226 6s. 6d. in Sir Sim. Degg’s *Parson’s Counsellor*, and other catalogues of the greater monasteries, by a mistake for £122 6s. 6d.”

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<sup>1</sup> *N.B.*—This should be 23 Hen. 7. Dugdale and Tanner are mistaken as to this; there is no charter 23 Hen. 6.—S. W. W

according to the *Chronicle of St. Werburgh*, in 1164, though a patent of the 23rd Hen. 6, which will hereafter be referred to, says in 1180. Rhees' confirmation of his first grant in 1184 will be found in the Appendix, together with a confirmation charter from King Henry the Second.

"This monastery was burnt down about A.D. 1294, in the wars between K. Edward I and the Welsh, apparently by mistake, the Patent, 28th Edward I, six years after, expressly states this. Being soon afterwards rebuilt, it flourished till the General Dissolution.

"The following are the notices of the Revenue of this monastery in the Taxation of 1291. Spiritual Beneficium in Dioc. Bangor, £16. Temporal. Dioc. Menaven., in Archid. Brecon, £7 15s. In Archid. Kardigan et Kaermerdyn, £22 15s. 4d. Dioc. Assaven, £2 9s. Dioc. Bangor, 6s. 8d. In the 26th Henry 8 the gross amount of the Revenue was £122 6s. 8d., the clear income, £118 7s. 3d. per ann'm.

"Strata Florida is now in the possession of the family of Powell of Nanteos.

"An imperfect impression of the common seal on Red Wax is in the possession of Dr. Meyrick. It has for its subject the Blessed Virgin and Child; all that can be read of the Inscription is *Sigillum cœ . . . . de Strata Florida*.

"Llanleir, or Llanclere, in Cardiganshire, is mentioned by Leland as a Cistercian Nunnery, cell to Stratfleur. It was of the yearly value of £57 5s. 4d., and was granted in the 7th Edw. 6, to William Sakervyle and John Dudley."

#### TRANSLATION OF CHARTER OF RHYS AP GRUFFYDD.

I am indebted to Mr. Edward Owen, of the India Office, for copies of certain documents preserved in the British Museum. Mr. Owen observes:—

"The following documents have been extracted from the British Museum (Additional MS. 24,839), a collection formed by the late Mr. Charles Devon, at one time a clerk in the Record Repository at the Tower. At that place were kept the archives of the old Augmentation Office, comprising almost every class of early record, and especially rich in charters and ecclesiastical documents. During Mr. Devon's period of service he came into possession of a number of officially certified copies of documents, then or at an earlier period contained in the Tower Collection.

"The first document here printed is a translation of the

charter of Rhys ap Gruffydd, generally held to have been the founder of Strata Florida Abbey. The document is No. 1 in Dugdale's Appendix of Instruments, where it is stated to have been taken from the original in the Augmentation Office. The present translation is not in Mr. Devon's handwriting, nor is its correctness certified to by any of the officers of his department. The notes appended to the translation are evidently by an individual who was acquainted with the topography of the Abbey lands."

Another copy of this translation was lent to me by Mr. Richard Williams, F.R.Hist.S., of Newtown, Montgomeryshire, the handwriting of which is identical with the copy in the British Museum. Mr. Williams states that he has compared his copy with a number of MSS. of the celebrated antiquary the Rev. Walter Davies of Manafon, which are in his possession, and has very little hesitation in saying that it is in his handwriting, and that there can be little doubt that this translation was made by Mr. Davies. The Rev. Walter Davies was in his day considered the highest authority upon every matter relating to Welsh antiquities and topography.

#### CHARTER OF RHYS AP GRUFFYDD.

"To all the sons of our holy Mother the Church present and to come, Rhys Prince of Wales wisheth Health and Peace. Be it known to all of you that I, Rhys, Proprietary Prince of South Wales, have begun to build the venerable Abbey entitled Strat-flur; when built have loved and cherished it, and have increased its Estates and Possessions, and enlarged them as much as I could with the assistance of the Lord, granting to it with a devout mind, for the cure of my soul and the souls of my predecessors and successors, land, champaign and arable and mountainous, for the pasture of animals, as much as is fitting for it; and all the Donation which I have heretofore conferred on the said Monastery I now again, in the 1184 year from the Incarnation of our Lord, have confirmed by the memory of the present writing; my three sons also, namely, Griffith, Rhys, and Meredith, have at the same time, in the same place, offered the same donation in the hand of the Abbot of Strat-flur; firmly enacting in the presence of many of our army in the Church of St. Bridget at Rhayader, that whatsoever possessions and goods and chattels the same Monastery at present possesses and holds, whether they have been obtained by the kindness of God, through the grant of Pontiffs, the free gifts of Princes, the oblation of the faithful, or any other just means, they may con-



time firm to the monks of it and their successors, free and wholly exempted from every secular and ecclesiastical custom and due.<sup>1</sup> In which we have thought proper to express these by their proper names.

Nanneyrth<sup>2</sup> in its boundaries; that is to say, from Nant y Fleiddias to the Wye,<sup>3</sup> from the Wye to the Hedernol,<sup>4</sup> from the Hedernol to its source, from thence across to Blaen Ystwith,<sup>5</sup> from Blaen Ystwith to Tavlogen<sup>6</sup> at the bottom, from Tavlogen to its source; from thence straight across to Marchnant,<sup>7</sup> from Marchnant to Meyric,<sup>7</sup> from Meyric to Teivy, from Teivy to Camddwr vechan,<sup>8</sup> from Camddwr fechan to its source; from thence along the Rossy Hollow (Pant y Wain) to Camddwr vawr,<sup>9</sup> afterwards through Camddwr vawr across to Hirvein Cadeithni, from Hirvein Cadeithni to the Ayron,<sup>10</sup> from thence along the course of that river to the Foss which is between Tref-Coll and Brumuric (perhaps Brynmeyric), from the Foss to its head, from the head of the Foss in a straight line to Pen Nant y Gillyhir, from thence straight along the Hivant, between Buarth Caron and Dinas y Driwtwyr (perhaps the City of the Traitors); from thence along the course of that river as far as the Grange which is called Castell y Flemmis;<sup>11</sup> thence<sup>12</sup> from the

<sup>1</sup> Inquiry should be made whether the original grant from the Crown of these Abbey lands in the time of Henry VIII hath any words to this purpose, or whether the grant may not contain a clause conveying the land in as large and ample a manner as it had ever been held by the Abbey.

<sup>2</sup> Farms near Rhayader.

<sup>3</sup> This river is well known.

<sup>4</sup> This river falls into the Wye some miles above Rhayader.

<sup>5</sup> "Blaen" means source. The river runs by the mine-works, Hafod, and Crosswood, and thence into the sea.

<sup>6</sup> A small brook which tumbles down the rock opposite Havod.

<sup>7</sup> Two small rivers. Marchnant falls into the Meyric, and the Meyric into the Teivy, on the north side thereof, between two and three miles below the Abbey.

<sup>8</sup> A small river running from the north-west, and falling into the Teivy about a mile to the westward of the Meyric.

<sup>9</sup> Another river in the same direction, about two or three miles to the west of the other.

<sup>10</sup> A considerable river which falls into the sea at Aberayron.

<sup>11</sup> A considerable encampment, supposed to have been formerly thrown up and occupied by the Flemings of Pembrokeshire.

<sup>12</sup> Thus far all the land conveyed is to the north of the Teivy; that which is conveyed from hence out lay to the south and to the east of that river. A part of this land, viz., that to the south of the Ystwith, till it comes opposite to Hafod, is allotted to the lower division of Gwnnws; another part of it, from the Meyric to the north

Grange, from another part of the river, over the hill in the direction of the Rossy Hollow, to the brook between Maesglas and Trebrisk; thence along the brook to Teivy, from Teivy to Maes-Treflynn, from Maes-Treflynn to Blaen Huden, to the lake of Nant y Meini; from the lake of Nant y Meini straight across to Llanerch y Gawiddfa (Gudva), from Llanerch y Guddva straight across the mountain to Gelly Angharad. That mountain afterwards is the boundary straight across to the source of Camddwr,<sup>1</sup> from thence along the course of the river to the Towy, from the Towy thence upward on each side of the river to its source; from the source of the Towy straight to the source of the Arban,<sup>2</sup> from thence to the Claërwen (so, probably, it should be read), from thence to Glan Ellan, from thence as far as Croën (perhaps Craig) Gwynmon, from thence straight upward as far as Tal-Lluchynt, from thence to Ceven yr Eglen, from thence as far as Blaen Rhiscant, from thence across the mountain as far as Llan-Unben, where the meres of the aforementioned land called Nannerth are equally intermingled with the just recited boundaries.

“Moreover, whatsoever is contained within the afore described bounds all around, in plain and in wood, in waters and in meadows and in pastures, in cultivated and uncultivated ground, I, Rhys, and aforementioned sons, and my whole posterity, do give in fee, by perpetual right, to the monks of Strat Flur and their successors; and these are the names of the more eminent places within these bounds,—Moyl Geydian, Nant Eylmer, Eym, Nant Morant, Brithir, Abercoyl, Abermethen, Stratnimru (perhaps Stratmeyrie), Kelly, Cwm Coyl, Priskyen, Eumaun, Stratflur, Ryt-Vendigaet, Dolvawr, Llwyn-gog, Trefygwyddel, Ffymnon-oyer, Kellyen, Brindeney, Esger-berveth, Castell Flemmis, Maesglas; and from the donation of the sons (of) Cadwgaun and their heirs, and of our dominion, Ceven Rhyd-Esger-Saisson, one half part of Bronwennu, except the Esger (*i.e.*, the Ridge), towards the Arth, where the sons of Seilsant have built their

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and west, to the Claërwen on the east, constitutes the upper division of Gwnnws; the part situated between the Camddwr vechan and Camddwr wawr (*i.e.*, the Little and Great Camddwr) makes a part of the upper division of Lledrod.

<sup>1</sup> This river is on the mountains to the south of the Teivy, and falls into the Towy. The Towy runs through Carmarthenshire and by Carmarthen.

<sup>2</sup> The Arban falls into the Claërwen about four miles to the east of the Abbey, the Claërwen into the Ellan, and the Ellan into the Wye about twenty miles to the east of the Abbey.

houses ; Trefboyth with its appurtenances ; and these are the bounds of the same according to the description of Rhys and his nobles, and also of his son Griffith : from Abermeylir upwards, along the Arth as far as the Foss which runs from the spring of Bleydud Orvanaun ; from thence along the hollow as far as the Ffos called Ffos y Byleynt, from the Ffos along the Rossy Hollow between Marchdi and Bryn-lleude, from the Hollow as far as the Ffos which is the boundary, and the village called Ardis-emkywet which Gwennlian offered to the said monks for perpetual alms, with our consent and that of our sons ; and the aforesaid Ffos is the boundary as far as the sea ; and the sea as far as the mouth of the Arth to Abermeylir, and the wears and all the fishery on the shore and in the sea, from the mouth of the Arth to the mouth of the Ayron, we offer to the said Monastery for ever ; and also from my own proper fish-pond one day and one night in every week.<sup>1</sup>

“And of this universal donation these are the witnesses,—the two sons of Llaudent, Griffri, and Rhys ; Iorwerth, the son of Edweyn ; Ediorwerth, the son of Kedivor ; the two sons of Llewelyn, Gwrgeneu, and Cadwgaun ; Mareddud, the son of Ryth-erch, and Gwgaun Scaica (perhaps Gwgaun Sais, *i.e.*, the Englishman) ; Griffith, the son of Bledwit of Mabudred ; and Mareddud, the son of Eimaun, the son of Bledwit of Werthliniaun.”

“This is followed by a translation of the confirming charter of Henry (No. II in Dugdale’s Appendix), and is given herewith :—

#### CHARTER OF HENRY II.

“Henry, by the grace of God, King of England, Duke of Normandy and Aquitain, &c. Know ye that I have granted, &c., to the Abbey of Strat-flur and the monks there serving God,

<sup>1</sup> From the Wye at Rhayader to the river Ayron, the most distant points to the east and west, there are about twenty-eight miles (measured I mean), and from the source of Camddwr vechan to the Towy about ten miles ; that is, where the land has the greatest breadth from the north-west to the south-east.

Many of the places are still known by the names, others have totally lost them ; but the knowledge or ignorance of them is, I conceive, just of the same consequence, that is, none at all.

The land given by the sons of Cadwgan is unconnected with the other, and about ten miles farther to the west. It lies to the north of the Ayron, where it falls into the sea. Mynachty (*i.e.*, Monk-house), the estate of Lewis Gwynne, Esq., was part of it.

the reasonable donation which Rhys, the son of Griffith, made to them of the lands underwritten, namely, of the Plain which is between Hendreskynavandu and the brook of Buarchegre, and thence as far as the Teivy, and Hirgarth as far as Flur and as far as Teivy, and of Llangareth as far as Hedegan, with their boundaries, and from the rivulet called Pastryth Gelly Angharad as far as the Teivy, and of LISPENNARD, and of Strat-flur, and of Keven Castell, with their boundaries, and of Maesglas with its boundaries, and of Pennal as far as the Ayron and as far as the Camddwr, and of Kevenpuet, with their boundaries, and of Kellyen Urmdevoy, and of Maesbre, with their boundaries, and of Ffynnon Oyer and Ryt y velin, upward as far as Maesbre, and of Drepyth Riwardd as far as the sea. Wherefore it is our Will, etc.

“To<sup>1</sup> T. Richard, Bishop of Winchester, and Geoffrey, Bishop of Ely, and Sefrid, Bishop of Chester, and Peter, Bishop of St. David’s, and Geoffrey the Chancellor, my son. At Winchester.”

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CHARTER OF MAELGWN, SON OF RHYS AP GRUFFYDD (1198).

*British Museum, Harley MS. 6068, f. 11 (1.)*

“Carta Mailgun filii Resi Principis South Walliæ 1198.

“Universis sancte ecclesie filiis presentibus et futuris qui hanc cartam inspexerint Mailgun filius Resi Princeps South-walliæ salutem. Notum facimus universitati vestre nos pro salute Anime nostræ et patris et matris et antecessorum nostrorum et successorum confirmasse Deo et beate Marie et Monachis de Stratflur omnes donaciones quas pie memorie pater meus Resus bonus princeps ejusdem Monasterii Magnificus fundator, predicto loco contulit. Hiis testibus, Reso filio Griff<sup>1</sup> qui hanc donacionem nostram sua donacione roboravit, Gruffy et Griffino filiis Cadugan, Kynberick filio Gruffini filii Llandent, Jorwerth filio Kedivor Reso filio llanden et cæteris. Datum xi. kl’ februarii Anno Millesimo exeviii ab incarnatione Domini.

“Carta Resi filij Resi 19 kl’ Januarit Anno ab incarnatione Domini 1198.”

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<sup>1</sup> The translator has mistaken the “T.” of the document (or of Dugdale, if the above has been taken from that collection), that is the “Teste”, for an initial letter of the Bishop’s name.

[Translation.]

“Charter of Mailgun, son of Resus, Prince of South Wales, 1198.

“To all the sons of the holy church present and to come who shall inspect this charter, Mailgun son of Resus, Prince of South Wales, greeting. We make known to the whole body of you that we, for the health of our soul, and of our father and mother, and our ancestors and successors, have confirmed to God and blessed Mary, and the monks of Stratflur, all the grants which my father, of pious memory, Resus the good prince, magnificent founder of the same Monastery, conferred upon the aforesaid place. These being the witnesses: Resus son of Griff, who corroborated this our grant with his grant, Gruffry and Griffin sons of Cadugan, Kynberich son of Gruffin son of Llandent, Jorwerth son of Kedivor, Resus son of Llanden and the rest. Dated 11th kalends of February, In the year one Thousand excviiij after the Incarnation of the Lord.

“Charter of Resus son of Resus, 19th kalends of January, In the year after the Incarnation of our Lord 1198.”

CHARTER OF RHYS, GRANDSON OF RHYS AP GRUFFYDD  
(1202).

*British Museum, Harley MS. 6068, f. 11 (2.)*

“Carta Resi filii Griffini filii Resi magni, 1202.

“Vniuersis matris ecclesie filiis qui hanc cartam inspexerint Resus filius Gruffini filii Resi magni Salutem. Vniuersitati vestre notum facio me dedisse et concessisse Monachis de Stratflur’ de (*sic for* Deo) et beatæ Marie ibidem seruientibus omnes donaciones quas pie memoriæ pater meus (*sic*) Gruffinus Avus meus Resus et omnes filii ejus dederunt, etc. Hanc autem donacionem primo sigillo quod habui confirmavi et ante hanc cartam nullam aliam alicui homini dedi nec aliquod Sigillum ante hec habui quo hanc cartam confirmavi. facta est autem hec donacio Anno ab incarnatione domini Millesimo ducentesimo secundo. Hiis Testibus, Matill’ matre mea et ceteris.”

[Translation.]

“Charter of Resus, son of Griffin, son of Resus the great, 1202.

“To all the sons of mother church who shall inspect this charter, Resus, son of Gruffin, son of Resus the great, greeting. I make known to the whole body of you that I have given and granted to the monks of Stratflur, in that same place serving

God and the blessed Mary, all the grants which my father of pious memory, Gruffin, and my grandfather Resus, and all his sons gave, etc. Moreover, I confirmed this grant with the first seal which I had, and before this charter I have given none other to any man, nor had I before this any seal wherewith I confirmed this charter. Moreover, this grant was made in the year after the Incarnation of our Lord One thousand two hundred and two. These being the witnesses: Matillis my mother and the rest."

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CHARTER OF MAELGWN, THE YOUNGER (1226-7).

*British Museum, Harley MS. 6068, f. 11 (3.)*

"Carta Mailgun Junioris filii Mailgonis filii Resi Principis Southwalliæ.

"Vniuersis sancte ecclesie filiis hanc cartam inspecturis Mailgon Junior filius Mailgonis filii Resi principis Southwalliæ salutem in Domino, ad vniuersitatis vestre pervenire volo me dedisse et concessisse Deo et beate Marie et Monachis de Stratflur, etc. Presens scriptum Sigilli mei Inpressione roboravi. Hiis Testibus Domino Mailgone filio Resi, Morgan filio Resi et cæteris."

[Translation.]

"Charter of Mailgun the Younger, son of Mailgon, son of Resus, Prince of South Wales.

"To all the sons of the blessed church who are about to inspect this charter, Mailgon the younger, son of Mailgon, son of Resus. Prince of South Wales, greeting in the Lord. I will that it should come to [the knowledge] of all of you that I have given and granted to God, and to the Blessed Mary, and to the monks of Stratflur, etc. I have corroborated the present writing by the impression of my seal. These being witnesses: the lord Mailgon, son of Resus; Morgan, son of Resus; and the rest."

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CHARTER OF CANAN, SON OF MEREDITH SON OF OWEYN

(no date).

*British Museum, Harley MS. 6068, f. 11b.*

"Carta Canani filii Mereduth filii Oweyn.

"Universis sancte ecclesie filiis Cananus filiis Mereduth filii Oweyn salutem et pacem vniuersitate vestre notum facio me dedisse t. et h. p. c. mea confirmasse omnes donaciones quas pie

recordacionis antecessor meus dominus Resus Magnus Southwallæ Princeps et omnes filii ejus ac nepotes et quas bone memorie dominus Maered filius Oweyn pater meus, Owenus etiam et Gruffinus fratres mei dederunt, etc. Concessi etiam omnia bona et singula quæ ex naufragio vel tempestate Maris fraccione Navis aut alterius vasis cujuscunque vel etiam ex wreck aut alio quocunque casu ad quascunque Monachorum terras devenerint et multas alias libertates et quietantiam de theloneo passagio et pontagio has donaciones sigilli mei impressione roboravi. Hiis testibus, Aniano tunc Abbate de Strataflorida, Gervasio Priore, Adam suppriori fratre, Madoco filio Gourgenev, Aniano Voil Magistris ovium et vaccarum, Gruffino filio Mered' fratre meo, Oweyno filio Morgan filii Eyniuni, Oweno filio Morgan filii Rees et ceteris."

[Translation.]

"The charter of Conan son of Meredith son of Oweyn.

"To all the sons of the blessed church, Conan son of Meredith, son of Oweyn, greeting and peace. I make known to all of you that I have given, granted, and by this my present charter confirmed all the grants which my ancestor of pious memory, the Lord Resus, the great Prince of South Wales, and all his sons and descendants, and which the lord Maered, the son of Oweyn, my father of good memory, also Owen and Gruffin, my brethren, have given, etc. Also I have granted all and singular the goods which by shipwreck or tempest of the sea, breakage of ship or other vessel whatsoever, or also by wreck or any other chance, shall happen to be upon any lands whatsoever of the monks, and many other liberties, and the quittance of toll, passage, and pontage. These grants I have corroborated by the impression of my seal. These being witnesses: Anian then Abbot of Strata florida, Gervase the prior, Adam the sub-prior, Brother Madoc son of Gourgenev, Anian voil, masters of the sheep and the cows, Gruffin son of Meredith my brother, Oweyn son of Morgan son of Eynion, Owen son of Morgan son of Rees, and the rest."

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CHARTERS OF KING JOHN (1200-12).

*Rotuli Chartarum, 1 John, A.D. 1200.*

(*Charter of John, A.D. 1200.*)

"Johannes, Dei gratia Rex etc. Sciatis nos concessisse et hac presenti carta nostra confirmasse Deo et Beate Marie Virginis et abbati de Stratflur et monachis ordinis Cisterciensis ibidem Deo

servientibus, omnia rationabilia dona que eis data fuerint tam in ecclesiasticis quam in secularibus possessionibus, sicut carte donatorum quas inde habent rationabiliter testantur, preterquam in Kimot de Cardigan quod Mailgun filius Resi nobis remisit. Quare volumus et firmiter precipimus quod predicti abbas et monachi omnia rationabilia dona sua habeant et teneant bene et in pace sicut superius scriptum est. Testibus Willielmo Marescallo, comite de Penbrocia, Gaufrido filio Petri comite Essexiæ, Willielmo comite Saresberiensis etc. Datum per manum Huberti, Cantuariensis archiepiscopi, cancellarii nostri apud Wigorn xi die Aprilis anno regni nostri primo."

[Translation.]

"John, by the Grace of God, King, etc. Know ye that we have given, and by this our charter have confirmed to God and the Blessed Virgin Mary, and the abbot of Stratflur, and the monks of the Cistercian order there serving God, all reasonable gifts which have been given to them, as well spiritual as temporal, and which according to the charters of the donors they reasonably hold, except in the comot of Cardigan, which Mailgun, the son of Rhys, hath given us. Wherefore we will and firmly decree that the aforesaid abbot and monks should have and hold well and peacefully all their reasonable gifts as above written. Witnesses, William Marshall, Earl of Pembroke. Geoffrey Fitz Piers, Earl of Essex. William [de Longespee], Earl of Salisbury.

"Given by the hand of Hubert [Walter], Archbishop of Canterbury, our Chancellor, at Worcester, on the 11th day of April in the first year of our reign." [A.D. 1200.]

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*Rotuli Chartarum, 1 John, 1200.*

*(Freedom from Toll, etc.)*

"Johannes, Dei gratia Rex etc., justiciariis etc. Precipimus vobis quod monachi de Stratflur et omnes res eorum, quas homines eorum suas esse poterunt assecurare dominicas, sint quiete de theloneo, et passagio et pontagio et de omnibus que ad nos spectant consuetudinibus. Et ideo prohibemus ne quis super hoc eos inde vexet vel disturbet super forisfacturam nostram, sicut carta Henrici Regis patris nostri rationabiliter testatur. Testibus Willielmo Marescallo comite de Penbrociæ, Willielmo Briwerro, etc. Datum per manum S. Wellensis archidiaconi, et Johannis de Gray archidiaconi de Glocestri apud Wigorn xi die April anno regni nostri primo."



[Translation.]

“John, by the Grace of God, King, etc., to the justiciars, etc. We declare to you that the monks of Stratflur and all their goods which their men may be able to affirm belong to their demesne, shall be quit of toll, passage and pontage, and of all customs which appertain to us. And we therefore prohibit anyone from vexing or disturbing them in this upon pain of our displeasure, as the charter of Henry the King our father reasonably testifies. Witnesses, William Marshal, Earl of Pembroke. William Briwerri’, etc.

“Given by the hand of S[imon Fitz-Robert], archdeacon of Wells, and John de Gray, archdeacon of Gloucester, at Worcester, on the 11th day of April in the first year of our reign.” [A.D. 1200.]

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*Rotuli Literarum Patentium* (f. 92b).

*Licence to the Abbot and Monks to export Wool*, 14 John, 1212.

“Rex ballivis portuum maris in Anglia. Sciatis quod dedimus licenciam abbati et monachis de Stratflur vendendi lanam suam et mittendi sine impedimento ultra mare, a die Pentecosti anno regni nostri XIII<sup>o</sup> usque in tres annos sequentes. Et ideo vobis mandamus quod ipsos super hoc non impediatis, accepta ab eis securitate quod non advocabunt nisi lanam suam propriam. Et in hujus rei testimonium has litteras nostras patentes vobis inde mittimus. Teste Willielmo Briwerro apud Westmonasterium XXIX die Maii. Per Dominum Wintoniensem, et breve de parvo sigillo.”

[Translation.]

“The King to the bailiffs of the seaports in England. Know ye that we have given licence to the abbot and monks of Stratflur to sell their wool and to send it without hindrance beyond sea for three years following the day of Pentecost, the fourteenth year of our reign. We therefore command you not to hinder them in this, having taken security from them that they will declare only their own wool. And in testimony hereof we send you these our letters patent. Witness, William Beriwerus, at Westminster, on the 29th day of May [A.D. 1212]. By the Lord [bishop of] Winchester, and by writ of Privy Seal.”

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## ORDER OF KING JOHN TO DESTROY THE ABBEY OF STRATA FLORIDA (1212).

*Ex. Rot. Lit. Claus.*, vol. i, f. 122.

“Rex Falkes etc. Mandam’ vob’ q’d Abb’iam de Stratflur’ q’ sustentat i’imicos n’ros sic’ nob’ mandastis destruatis i’ q’antu’ pot’itis, castra aut’ debilia Ball’e vre q’ ten’i no’ poss’t co’buri faciatis et ea q’ q’ b’oa s’t et ten’i poss’t muniatis et custodiri faciatis. *T’ ut p’x’o sup’a* [Teste ut proximo supra].

“Testo me ip’o ap’ Noting’ xvij die Aug. anno xiiij<sup>o</sup>.” [This is the date on “ut proximo supra”.]

[Translation.]

“The King to Falkes [de Breaute’]. We command that you destroy the Abbey of Strata Florida, which harboured our enemies (as we have commanded you), in so far as you are able. That the weak castles in your bailiwick which you are not able to hold be burned; and that those which are good and it is possible to defend, let them be held and guarded.

“Witnessed by *me myself* at Nottingham, the 17 day of Aug. in the 14th year” [Saturday, Aug. 17th, 1212].

## MAILGWN, THE YOUNGER, AND GILBERT EARL MARESCHALL (1240).

*British Museum, Harley MS. 6068, f. 8.*

M. 25, H. 3, coram Rege.

“Placita coram Rege in Crastino Michaelis Anno xxv<sup>to</sup> Regis Henrici iii<sup>tti</sup> .

G. Marescallus quare  
cepit homagium  
de Maelgoen ap Mael-  
goen de terris inter  
Ayrn et tywy.

“G. Marescallus Comes Pembrok summonitus fuit coram Domino Rege in Crastinum in xv dies ad Respondendum ipso Domino Regi et Mailgwn filio Mailgon’ quare cepit homagium ipsius Mailgon’ ipso invito de omnibus terris suis inter aquas de Ayrn et de Tywy quas idem Mailgon’ debet tenere de domino Rege in capite et omnes antecessores sui tenerunt de antecessoribus domini Regis Regum Anglie et unde idem Mailgo prius fecit homagium ipso Domino Regi.

“Et Comes venit et cognovit quod ipse et Mailgon sunt con-

c[ordati] et profert quoddam scriptum in quo continetur quedam confederacio facta inter ipsum comitem et predictum Mailgon' scilicet quod Resus filius Mailgon' debuit desponsare Isabellam filiam ipsius comitis et quod tam dictus Meilgon' quam predictus Resus et heredes sui tenebunt omnes predictas terras excepto castro de Cardigan et Comot de Hishirwen quod idem comes habet de dono domini Regis imperpetuum et inde cepit homagium suum. Requisitus quo warranto hoc fecit dicit quod per donum quod Dominus ei fecit de castro de Cardigan et comotum cum pertinentiis. Et dicit quod quando Dominus Rex dedit ei predictam castrum ipse Dominus Rex non fuit inde in seisinā nec ipse comes set post mortuo Lewelin et predicto Mailgon non existente ad fidem Domini Regis ipse comes occasione predicti doni misit Waltherum fratrem suum cum exercitu suo super ipsum Mailgon qui occupavit omnes predictas terras super eum Et bene dicit quod Dominus Rex et Antecessores sui semper soliti fuerunt tenere predictas terras eodem modo quo ipse modo tenet eas et etiam tempore pacis dicit etiam quod cum ipse Reddidit Domino Regi honorem de Aquila ipse Dominus Rex concessit ei omnia castra terras et tenementa sua et omnes tenuras suas cum pertinentiis quæ idem comes habuit eodem die scilicet vigilia sancti Botulfi tam in Anglia quam in Wallia Et Rotulus Cancellarie in quo Carta Domini Regis quam Comes inde habet illud idem testatur Et bene dicit quod predicto die scilicet vigilia Sancti Botulfi habuit ipse predictum castrum de Cardigan Commotum et omnes predictas terras et petit quod istud ei allocetur Et si illud non debeat ei valere dicit aliud.

“Et Mailgon' venit et dicit quod revera ipse fecit homagium predicto Comiti de predictis terris et quod ita prelocutum fuit inter eos de predicta consideratione sicut predictum est scilicet dicit quod hoc fecit per vim et coactam ipsius

per minas	Comitis Et dicit quod quicquid ipse
fecit homagium	fecisset per vim et coactionem ipse debet
	tenere omnes predictas terras preter
	castrum de Cardigan et Comotum de

Domino Rege in capite Et profert cartam Regis Johannis patris Domini Regis qui nunc est quæ testatur quod idem Rex

iiii cantred : de	Johannes concessit et carta sua con-
Card' in capite	firmavit Meilgon' filio Resi iiii <sup>or</sup> Cantredas
	quæ appellantur Cardigan preter Castel-
	lum de Cardigan et comotum quod dicitur

Hishirwen quæ predictus Mailgon' remisit predicto Regi Johanni pro ducentis marcis quas ei dedit et quod concessit eidem

Castr' Card' cum  
ishirwerne, Kil-  
garran et Emlin

Mailgon' et confirmavit Castellum de Kilgaren et Emelin Habendum et tenendum predicto Meilgon' et heredibus suis etc., profert etiam aliam Cartam ejusdem Regis que similiter testatur quod Idem Rex concessit et confirmavit predicto

Meilgon' filio Resi predictas iiii<sup>or</sup> cantredas et tam ista jura sua quam alia adquisita vel acquirenda super inimicis ipsius Regis tenendum de eodem Rege et heredibus suis Et quod idem Meilgon' reddidit eidem Regi et quietum clamavit predictum Castellum de Cardigan et comotum imperpetuum vnde iste Mailgon' dicit quod predictus Meilgon' filius Resi pater ejus feoffatus fuit per predictum Regem Johannem de omnibus predictis terris excepto castro de Cardigan et Comoto de Hishirwen et ipse post mortem predicti Meilgon' patris ejus fuit in seisinam de predictis terris quousque predictus Comes per vim eas occupasset super eum et vnde dicit quod per illam occupationem deterrioratus est ad valentiam x<sup>millia</sup> marcarum.

"Et comes defendit vim et injuriam dampna et totum etc., sicut ad solam vocem ipsius Meilgon'. Et insuper dicit quod de illo quod predictus Meilgon dicit quod comes debet eum imprisonment apud Kilgaren et coegisse ad faciendum ei homagium et predictam considerationem scilicet in Crastinum natalis domini sicut predictus Comes apud Haverford in Wallia Et bene dicit quod predictus Meilgon fecit ei homagium et predictam considerationem gratis et non coactis scilicet sua bona voluntate et inde producit sectam.

"Dicit et Comes quod Dominus Rex qui nunc est dedit ei predictum Castrum de Cardigan et Comotum cum omnibus pertinentiis suis per cartam suam que hoc testatur jam pluribus Annis elapsis et ipse preterea posuit se in seisinam de predictis terris sic de illis que fuerunt pertinentes ad predictum Castrum et Comotum et quos Ballivi Domini Regis semper soliti fuerunt tenere sic pertinentes ad predictum castrum nisi quando predictus Meilgon et antecessores sui illas occupaverunt super ipsum Dominum Regem sic multotiens facerunt et Dominus Rex eodem modo super eos.

"Preterea dicit quod Carte Regis Johannis quas prædictus Meylgon' profert vacue sunt eo quod dictus Meylgon' vel antecessores sui nunquam post carte ille facte fuerunt habuerunt seisinam de predictis terris unde ipse Comes cepit homagium predicti Meylgon' nisi hoc esset per violentam occupationem super dominum Regem et tempore guerre vnde videtur ei quod carte ille non debe[n]t ei nocere.

"Et Meylgon' dicit quod nescit placitare secundum consuetu-

dinem Anglie nec habet consilium sicut opus haberet et ideo dies datus ei ad deliberandum usque in Crastinum. Et idem dies datus et Comiti vt in Crastinum dicat aliud si velit.

“In crastino venit Comes et quesitum fuit ab eo si aliud vellet dicere; et ipse nichil aliud dixit, set recitat omnia que prius dixerat. Et Meylgon dicit sicut prius dixit quod nescit placitare nec habet consilium, set breuiter dicit quod antecessores sui tenuerunt prædictas terras excepto castro de Cardigan et Comoto de Domino Rege in capite. Et ipse similiter debet eas tenere Et dicit quod ipse est in seisina de prædictis terris et inde fecit homagium Domino Regi Et petit quod possit eas tenere in pace et quod Dominus Rex manuteneat eum in seisina sua.

“Postea venit Dominus Rex et dicit quod quando ipse dedit predicto Comiti predictum castrum de Cardigan et Comotum cum pertinentiis fuit ipse Dominus Rex in seisina de homagio predicti Maylgonis de illis terris vnde antea feoffatus fuit per Regem Johannem patrem ejus Et petit iudicium, sicut Comes cognovit quod cepit homagium predicti Maylgon’ de eisdem terris.

“Preterea dicit Dominus Rex per violentam occupationem quam prædictus Comes fecit super predictum Maylgonem de eisdem terris dampnificatus est ipse Dominus Rex ita quod nollet habuisse dampnum nec dedecus xx<sup>mille</sup> marcarum et similiter petit inde iudicium.

“Et Comes defendit vim et injuriam et homagium captum contra fidem Domini Regis dampna et totum quicquid est contra pacem et fidem Domini Regis versus dominum Regem sicut versus Dominum suum Et dicit quod non videtur ei quod modo debeat inde respondere, sicut ipse prius respondit tam Domino Regi quam predicto Maylgoni de omnibus rebus de quibus versus eum loqui voluerunt et pro quibus summonitus fuit, et nichil remansit ulterius nisi solummodo iudicium.

Coram quibus tractabatur de isto negotio.

“Postea presentibus W. Eboracensi Archiepiscopo, P. Herefordensi et W. Carlolensi Episcopis, Humfrido Comite Herefordie, Baldewino Comite de Insula, Petro Sabaud’, Johanne de Monemuto, ffulcone filio

Herb’t f’ petr’. Warini, Herberto filio Petri, Stephano de Segraue, Roberto de Lexinton, Johanne filio Galfridi, Willelmo de Cantelup, Bertramo de Criol’, Johanne de Estrang, Roberto de la hay, Radulpho de Suthleg’, Waltero de Clifford, Willelmo de Bello campo, et Johanne de Plessett et aliis Domini Regis fidelibus tractatum fuit de isto negotio. Et videtur eis quod si ille terre vnde predictus Comes cepit homagium predicti Maylgon’ fuerunt pertinens ad predic-

tum Castrum de Cardigan et comotum quod Comes deliquit versus Dominum Regem eo quod sine licentia ipsius Domini Regis cepit homagium ejus et eo quod dominus Rex non dedit predicto Comiti predictum castrum cum pertinentiis nisi ad terminum qui poterit evenire scilicet quousque redderet predicto Comiti vel heredibus suis terras suas quas habere deberent in Normannia quia per talem donacionem vel concessionem non potuit ipse Comes capere perpetuum homagium predicti Maylgon' de predicta terre. Preterea si predictæ terre non sunt pertinentes ad predictum castrum et comotum adhuc deliquit Comes versus ipsum Dominum Regem capiendo homagium predicti Maylgon' baronis sui de terris quas ipse debet tenere de domino Rege in capite. Et ideo consideratum est quod Dominus Rex recuperet homagium predicti Maylgon' baronis sui, et Comes per transgressionem in misericordia.

"Preterea quia ad instantiam et querelam predicti Maylgon' fuit Comes summonitus coram domino Rege apud Wodestock Et Comes secundum legem et consuetudines Anglie sufficienter defendit contra predictum Maylgon' consideratum est quod Comes recedat inde sine die et predictus Maylgon' in misericordia. Et habeat b'le recuperare versus Comitum quale habere debeat.

"Preterea de eo quod dictus Rex acculpavit predictum Comitem quod per occupationem quam idem Comes fecit super predictum Maylgon' damnificatus fuit ipse Dominus Rex ad valencium x<sup>mille</sup> marcarum nec nominavit in quo vel in quibus rebus Et Comes sufficienter defendit contra Dominum suum consideratum est quod Comes sit inde quietus juxta illud *Names fremcles*.

"Preterea sciendum est quod ipse Comes ac etiam predictus Maylgon renuntiaverunt predictæ consideracioni inter eos prelocute et concesserunt quod si aliqua instrumenta ex alterutra parte in posterum proferantur de predicta consideracione quod omnino pro nullis habeantur."

[Translation.]

"M., 25 Hen. III, before the King.

"Pleas in the King's Bench on the Morrow of Michaelmas, in the twenty-fifth year of Henry III.

G. Mareschal :  
wherefore he took  
homage of Maelgoen  
ap Maelgoen, for  
lands between Ayron  
and Tywy.

"G. Mareschal, Earl of Pembroke, was summoned before the lord king within a fortnight of the morrow, to reply to the same lord king, and to Mailgwn, son of Mailgon : wherefore he took homage of the same Mailgon, the latter being unwilling, for all his lands between the

waters of Ayrn and of Tywy, which the same Mailgon ought to hold of the lord king in chief, and all his ancestors held of the ancestors of the lord king, being kings of England, and whereof the same Mailgon formerly made homage to the same lord king.

“And the Earl came and admitted that he and Mailgon are agreed, and he puts in a certain deed wherein is contained a certain confederation made between him the Earl and the aforesaid Mailgon, to wit, that Resus, son of Mailgon, undertook to espouse Isabella, daughter of the said Earl, and that as well the said Mailgon as the aforesaid Resus and their heirs shall hold all the aforesaid lands except the castle of Cardigan and comote of Hishirwen, which the same Earl holds of gift of the lord king for ever, and whereof he took his homage.

“Being demanded by what warrant he did this, he says that it was by the gift which the lord king made to him of, the Castle of Cardigan and the comote with appurtenances, and he says that when the lord king gave to him the aforesaid castle the same lord king was not thereof in seisin, nor the said Earl; but after Llewellyn was dead, and the aforesaid Mailgon was not in fealty to the lord king, he the Earl, by reason of the aforesaid gift, sent Walter, his brother, with his army against the said Mailgon, who had occupied all the aforesaid lands against him. And he well says that the lord king and his ancestors were always accustomed to hold the aforesaid lands in the same manner as he now holds them, and also in time of peace. He says also that when he rendered up to the lord king the honour of Eagle, the same lord king granted to him all his castles, lands, and tenements, and all his tenures with the appurtenances which the same Earl held on the same day, to wit, the vigil of St. Botulph, both in England and in Wales. And the Chancery Roll, wherein the charter of the lord king which the Earl thereof holds, witnesses that same thing. And he well says that on the aforesaid day, to wit, the vigil of St. Botulph, he held the aforesaid Castle of Cardigan, the comote, and all the aforesaid lands, and prays that this may be allowed him. And if this ought not to prevail, he will declare another reason.

“And Mailgon comes and says that in verity he performed homage to the aforesaid Earl for the aforesaid lands, and that it was thus prearranged between them for the aforesaid consideration, as is aforesaid, to wit, he says that he did this by force and compulsion of this same Earl; and he says that whatsoever he did by force and compulsion

By threats he performed homage.

he ought to hold all the aforesaid lands, except the Castle of Cardigan and the comote, of the lord king in chief; and he puts in the charter of King John, father of the lord king who now is, which witnesses that the same King John granted, and

by his charter confirmed, to Meilgon, son of Resus, four cantreds, which are called Cardigan, except the Castle of Cardigan and the comote which is called

Hishirwen, which the aforesaid Mailgon remitted to the aforesaid King John for two hundred marks, which he gave to him; and that he granted to the same Mailgon and confirmed the

Castle of Cardigan and the comote which is called Cardigan Castle with Isherwerne, his heirs, etc. He puts in also another charter of the same king, which likewise witnesses that the same king granted and confirmed to the aforesaid Meilgon,

son of Resus, the aforesaid four cantreds, and as well these his rights as others acquired or to be acquired from the enemies of the same king, to be held of the same king and his heirs; and that the same Meilgon rendered up to the same king and quit-claimed the aforesaid Castle of Cardigan and comote for ever; wherefore this Mailgon says that the aforesaid Meilgon, son of Resus, his father, was enfeoffed by the aforesaid King John of all the aforesaid lands, except the Castle of Cardigan and the comote of Hishirwen, and he himself, after the death of the aforesaid Meilgon, his father, was in seisin of the aforesaid lands until the aforesaid Earl by force entered upon them against him, and therefore he says that by that occupation he has been injured to the value of ten thousand marks.

“And the Earl defends the force and injury, the loss and all, etc., inasmuch as it rests on the sole testimony of the same Meilgon. And furthermore, he says that as for that which the aforesaid Meilgon says, the Earl ought to have imprisoned him at Kilgaren and compelled him to perform homage to him and the aforesaid consideration, to wit, on the morrow of Christmas, as the aforesaid Earl at Haverford in Wales. And he well says that the aforesaid Meilgon performed homage to him and the aforesaid consideration without conditions and not by compulsion, that is, of his own good will, and thereof he produces suit.

“And the Earl says that the lord king who now is gave him the aforesaid Castle of Cardigan and comote with all their appurtenances by his charter, which witnesses this, already many years since, and moreover put him in seisin of the afore-



said lands as of those appertaining to the aforesaid castle and comote, and which the bailiffs of the lord king were always accustomed to hold as appertaining to the aforesaid castle, except when the aforesaid Meilgon and his ancestors occupied them against the same lord king, as they oftentimes did, and the lord king in like manner against them.

“Furthermore, he says that the charters of King John, which the aforesaid Meylgon puts in, are void, in so much as the said Meylgon or his ancestors never, after those charters had been made, had seisin of the aforesaid lands whereof the same Earl took homage of the aforesaid Meylgon, unless it were by the violent occupation against the lord king and in the time of war, and therefore it appears to him that those charters ought not to affect him.

“And Meylgon says that he knows not how to plead according to the custom of England, nor hath he counsel as he should needs have; and, therefore, a day is appointed to him to consider until the morrow. And the like day is appointed to the Earl that on the morrow he may make another reply if he will.

“On the morrow comes the Earl, and it was demanded of him if he would make another reply, but he recites all that he had formerly alleged. And Meylgon says, as he had said before, that he knows not how to plead, nor hath he counsel; but, in brief, he says that his ancestors held the aforesaid lands, except the castle of Cardigan and the Comote, of the lord king in chief. And he in like manner ought to hold them. And he says that he is in seisin of the aforesaid lands, and thereof made homage to the lord king. And prays that he may hold them in peace, and that the lord king may maintain him in his seisin.

“Afterwards comes the lord king, and says that when he gave to the aforesaid Earl the aforesaid castle of Cardigan, and the comote with the appurtenances, the said lord king was in seisin of the homage of the aforesaid Maylgon for those lands whereof he was formerly enfeofed by King John his father. And prays judgment, inasmuch as the Earl admitted that he took homage of the aforesaid Maylgon for the same lands.

“Furthermore, the lord king says that by the violent occupation which the aforesaid Earl made over the aforesaid Maylgon, of the same lands, the same lord king has been damaged as he would not have had damage nor injury, of twenty thousand marks, and likewise prays for judgment thereof.

“And the Earl defends the force and injury and homage taken against the faith of the lord king, and whatever is against the peace and faith of the lord king, against the lord king as against

his lord. And he says that it does not appear to him that he ought now to reply thereto, as he formerly replied both to the lord king and to the aforesaid Maylgon concerning all the matters whereof they alleged against him, and wherefore he was summoned, and nothing remained further except only the judgment.

“Afterwards this matter was deliberated in the presence of W. Archbishop of York, P. Bishop of Hereford, and W. Bishop

Before whom this	of Carlisle, Humphrey Earl of Hereford,
matter was	Baldewine Earl de L’Isle, Peter of Savoy,
deliberated.	John of Monmouth, Fulke Fitz-Warine,
	Herbert Fitz-Peter, Stephen de Segrave,
	Robert de Lexinton, John Fitz-Geoffrey,

William de Cantilage, Bertram de Criol, John de Estrange, Robert de la Hay, Ralph de Suthleg’, Walter de Clifford, William de Beauchamp, and John de Plessets, and other faithful ones of the lord king. And it appeared to them that if those lands whereof the aforesaid Earl took homage of the aforesaid Maylgon were appertaining to the aforesaid Castle of Cardigan and Comote, that the Earl failed in duty towards the lord king, because without the permission of the same lord king he took his homage, and because the lord king did not give to the aforesaid Earl the aforesaid Castle with the appurtenances, except for a term which could come to pass, to wit, until he should render up to the aforesaid Earl or his heirs his lands which they ought to have in Normandy, because by such grant or concession the same Earl could not take the perpetual homage of the aforesaid Maylgon of the aforesaid lands. Furthermore, if the aforesaid lands are not appertaining to the aforesaid Castle and Comote, yet the Earl failed in duty towards the same lord king, by taking the homage of the aforesaid Maylgon, his baron, for lands which he ought to hold of the lord king in chief. And, therefore, it was determined that the lord king should recover the homage of the aforesaid Maylgon his baron, and the Earl is found guilty of trespass.

“Moreover, because the Earl had been summoned before the lord king at Woodstock, at the instance and complaint of the aforesaid Maylgon. And the Earl sufficiently defended the charge made by the aforesaid Maylgon, according to the law and customs of England, it was determined that the Earl should be acquitted *sine die*, and the aforesaid Maylgon be nonsuited, and let him have permission (?) to recover against the Earl what he ought to have.

“Moreover, in so far as the said king accused the aforesaid Earl that, by the occupation which the same Earl made

over the aforesaid Maylgon, the same lord king was damaged to the amount of ten thousand marks, he did not specify in what way or in what things. And the Earl's defence sufficed against his lord; it was determined that the Earl should be quit thereof, in accordance with the maxim '*Names fremes*'.

"Moreover, it is to be known that the same Earl, and also the aforesaid Maylgon, have renounced the aforesaid consideration agreed upon beforehand between them, and have undertaken that if any deeds from either party be produced hereafter concerning the aforesaid consideration, they shall be held completely of none account."

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#### INQUISITION AT MONTGOMERY (1252).

*Chaneery Inquisition post mortem, 36 Henry III. No. 65.*

"H. D'i gr'a Rex Angl' D'n's Hib'n' Dux Norm' Aquit' et Com's And' dil'co et fidei suo Guidoni de Rupe forti Ball'o suo de Mungum'y sal'm. Mandamus vobis q'd p' sacr' p'bor' et leg' hominu' diligent' inquiratis qualiter Abbas [de] Strata Florida usus est in Ball'a v'ra libertatibus contentis in cartis suis et quibus articulis ip'e usus est et quibus non. Et inquisic'om inde f'eam sub sigillo v'ro et sigillis eor' p' quos f'ea fu'it nobis sine dil'one mittatis et hoc br'e.

"T. Me ip'o ap'd Wind' .x. die Febr' a r' n' xxxvj.

"Inquisit'o f'ea apud Mungomi' p' p'ceptu' d'ni Reg' die Martis p'x'a post festu' s'c'i Joh'nis ante portam Latina' ann' xxxvj<sup>to</sup> sup' articulis et lib'tatib' contentis in cartis d'ni abbatis de Strataflorida p' sac<sup>a</sup>mentu' subscriptor'.

"Baldwini de Mu'gom'i. Ph'i f' Alexandri. Will'i Le Gras. Steph'ni filii Will'i. Phi' fil' Aluredi. Will'i Sage. Ric' Lance. Rob'ti f' Walt'i. Regin' f' Brun. Will'i f' Brun. Joh'nis filii Aluredi. Qui dicunt quod abbas de Strataflorida et ho'i'es sui temp'e d'ni Rob'ti de Budlers et temp'e Baldwini de Budlers et temp'e Will'i de Curteney usi fu'unt om'ib' Lib'tatib' et articulis in cartis suis contetis (*sic*) Set postq<sup>a</sup>m d'n's Rex construxit castru' suu' de Mungom'i no' sunt usi Lib'tatib' suis et articulis in cartis suis c'tentis.

"In cuius Rei testimoniu' p'senti scripto sigilla sua aposu'u't."

[Translation.]

[The writ.]

"H[enry III], by the grace of God King of England, Lord of Ireland, Duke of Normandy, Aquitaine, and Earl of Anjou, to his very dear and faithful Guy Rochfort (de Rupe forti), his

Bailiff of Montgomery, greeting. We command you that, by the oath of true and lawful men, you diligently enquire how the abbot of Strata Florida used the liberties contained in his charters, and which articles he used, and which he did not, in your bailiwick; and the Inquisition made thereupon, under your seal and the seals of those by whom it shall be made, you send to us without delay, and this writ.

“Witness Ourself at Windsor, the 10th day of February, in the 36th year of our reign [A.D. 1252].”

[The Inquisition.]

“Inquisition made at Montgomery, by the command of the Lord the King, on the Tuesday next after the Feast of St. John before the Latin Gate, in the 36th year [7 May, A.D. 1252], concerning the articles and liberties contained in the charters of the Lord abbot of Strata Florida, by the oath of the under-written [men].

“Baldwin de Mungomeri; Philip, son of Alexander; William Le Gras; Stephen, son of William; Philip, son of Alured; William Sage; Richard Lance; Robert, son of Walter; Reginald, son of Brun; William, son of Brun; John, son of Alured. Who say that the abbot of Strata Florida and his men in the time of the Lord Robert de Budlers, and in the time of Baldwin de Budlers, and in the time of William de Curteney, have used all the liberties and articles contained in their charters. But, after that the Lord the King constructed his castle of Montgomery, they did not use their liberties and articles contained in their charters.

“In witness of which thing they have put their seals to this present writing.”

#### LETTERS PATENT FROM GENERAL CHAPTER AT CITEAUX (1253).

*British Museum, Harley Charter 75. D. 11.*

“Universis Christi fidelibus . presens scriptum visuris . vel auditoris . ffratres . J. de Thintern . St. De Dora dicti Abbates salutem in domino . Noverit dilectio vestra . nos quasdam litteras . a Capitulo Generali Dompno Abbati de Strata florida . In presentia nostra transmissas : inspexisse . Anno Domini . mº. ccº. lº tertio . In Alba Domo . sub hac forma .

“ ‘ In crastino vndecim milium virginum . ffrater R. dictus Abbas Cisterciensis totusque Conventus Abbatum Capituli Generalis . Dilecto in Christo Coabbati suo de Strata florida salutem . et scinceram In domino . caritatem . Cum sententia diffinitiva . Inter Domum de Margan . et Kerlion filiam ves-

tram . per venerabilis . de Buldwas . de Brueria et de kinges  
wde Abbates . rite ac judicialiter lata . a capitulo generali  
approbata sit et confirmata . Dilectionem vestram benigne  
rogamus . vobis tenore presentium mandantes Quatinus dictam  
sententiam . a filiis vestris dictæ Domus personis . auctoritate  
nostra . inviolabiliter faciatis observari . Ne quod absit de ipsis  
aliquid rebellionis seu tergiversationis contra dictam sententiam  
factum ; Nobis de cetero . querulosa insinuatione debeat pre-  
sentari . Tantum super premissis fatientes . ut diligens executio  
vestra In hac parte merito debeat commendari . Valete .  
Datum . Apud Cistercium . Anno Domini . M<sup>o</sup> cc<sup>o</sup> . L<sup>o</sup> . Tertio .  
tempore Capituli Generalis .’

“In cujus rei testimonium huic scripto patenti sigilla nostra  
apposuimus . Valete.”

[Translation.]

“To all the faithful ones of Christ about to see or to hear  
the present writing, the Brethren J. termed Abbot of Tintern  
and St. termed Abbot of Dore, greeting in the Lord. Know  
ye, beloved ones, that we have inspected certain letters sent  
from the general chapter to the Lord Abbot of Stratafflorida  
in our presence, in the year of the Lord MCCLIII. In Alba  
Domus, after this manner :

“On the morrow of the eleven thousand virgins, Brother  
R., termed Abbot of Cîteaux, and the whole convent of abbots  
of the general chapter, to the beloved in Christ, their fellow  
Abbot of Stratafflorida, greeting, and sincere charity in the  
Lord. Whereas the final sentence between the House of  
Margan and Kaerlion your daughter, which has been rightly  
and lawfully declared by the venerable Abbots of Buildwas  
and of Brueria and of Kingswood, has been approved and con-  
firmed by the general chapter. We benignly request you,  
beloved ones, commanding you by the tenour of these presents,  
that you cause the said sentence by our authority to be inviol-  
ably preserved by your sons, the inmates of the said house.  
Lest (which God forbid) aught of rebellion or backsliding done  
against the said sentence should be presented before us con-  
cerning them, in form of a complaint alleged, you only per-  
forming such things in regard to the foregoing, that your  
diligent execution in this behalf should rightly be commended.  
Farewell. Given at Cîteaux, in the year of our Lord MCCLIII,  
at the time of the general chapter.’

“In witness whereof we have appended our seals to this  
patent writing. Farewell.”

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ABBOT OF STRATA FLORIDA AND EDMUND DE MORTIMER  
(1293).

*British Museum, Addit. MS. 4525, f. 92.*

“Wallia. Abbas de Strata florida questus fuit Domino Regi in parlamento suo post Pascham, anno regni suo vicesimo primo, de Edmundo de Mortuo Mari, de hoc quod predictus Edmundus ipsum Abbatem distrinxit et distringere fecit veniendi ad Curiam suam de Kedewyn, in præjudicium et exhæredationem Domini Regis, et dampnum ip sius Abbatis non modicum et gravamen, cum idem Abbas non sit de jurisdictione prædicti Edmundi etc. Et Dominus Rex assignavit Robertum de Tybetot et Gilbertum de Thornton, ad audiendum et terminandum prædictam querelam. Et unde Dominus Rex per Ricardum de Bretvill qui sequitur pro eo et prædictus abbas queruntur quod cum prædictus abbas nec prædecessores sui placitare vel inplacitari consueverunt de terris tenementis possessionibus sive placitis aliis hucusque nisi in Curia Principis Walliæ per breviam ipsius Principis vel sine brevi cujus statum Dominus Rex modo habet prædictus Edmundus distrinxit prædictum Abbatem ad respondendum in Curia sua prædicta de diversis placitis in præjudicium et exhæredationem Domini Regis viginti mille librarum et dampnum ipsius Abbatis. Et hoc offerunt verificare etc.

“Et prædictus Edmundus per Nicholaum de Redingges attornatum suum venit Et defendit vim et injuriam quando, etc. Et dicit quod ad querelam istam non debet hic sine brevi Domini Regis respondere Quia dicit quod prædictus Abbas et prædecessores sui de Strata florida in Curia Rogeri de Mortuo Mari Patris sui cujus hæres ipse est de hujusmodi placitis hucusque placitare et inplacitari consueverunt Unde petit quod non ponatur inde ad respondendum sine brevi Domini Regis Et quod prædictus Rogerus pater suus obiit seiscitus de hujusmodi jurisdictione et dominio ponit se super patriam. Et Ricardus de Bretvill pro Domino Rege et prædictus Abbas pro seipso dicunt quod ipse Abbas nec prædecessores sui unquam placitare sine inplacitari consueverunt in Curia prædicti Rogeri patris prædicti Edmundi de aliquibus placitis nec idem Rogerus de hujusmodi jurisdictione obiit seiscitus sicut prædictus Edmundus dicit set idem Edmundus fuit primus qui distrinxit de injuria sua propria et purprestura super Dominum Regem prædictum Abbatem veniendi ad Curiam ipsius Edmundi prædictam Et hoc petunt inquiri per patriam etc., Et prædictus Edmundus similiter Ideo mandatum est Roberto Tybetot Justiciario Westwalliæ quod venire faciat coram Rege a die Sancti Michaelis in xv dies ubicumque, etc., xii etc., et etiam Roberto de Staundon

Justiciario Nortwalliæ quod de balliva sua venire faceret xii etc., ad præfatum terminum etc. Et Oweno de la Pole quod venire faceret xii etc., de terra sua de Aresteleye Et similiter præceptum est Vicecomiti Salopiensi quod venire faceret xii etc., per quos, etc. Et qui rec, etc., ad recognoscendum etc. Et quia Dominus Rex qui nunc est dedit Cantredum de Kedenwen per Cartam suam prædicto Rogero patri prædicti Edmundi in quo prædictus Abbas habet terras ut dicitur per quam Cartam jus Domini Regis in hac parte forte poterit declarari dictum est attornato prædicti Edmundi quod habeat cartam prædictam coram Domino Rege ad præfatum terminum etc., sub pœna qua decet etc. Et quod prædictus Abbas pendente placito prædicto non distringatur nec molestetur in aliquo ea occasione etc. Et prædictus Abbas ponit loco suo fratrem Johannem Kayov in placito prædicto etc.

“Postea a die Paschæ in quinque septimanas anno xxii venit prædictus Edmundus et similiter prædictus abbas et per licentiam concordati sunt Et Abbas dat viginti solidos pro licentia concordandi Et est concordia talis quod prædictus Edmundus cognovit et concessit pro se et hæredibus suis inperpetuum quod prædictus Abbas nec successores sui per ipsum Edmundum et hæredes suos sive alios quoscunque implacitetur sive implacentur de terris et tenementis suis quibuscunque infra Dominum de Kedewyn nunc existentibus nisi per breve Domini Regis et hæredum suorum in curia ipsius Regis et hæredum suorum Salvo tamen ipsi Edmundo et hæredibus suis quod ipsi secundum consuetudinem patriæ illius prius usitatam habeant cognitionem omnimodorum placitorum aliorum terras et tenementa non tangencium de prædicto Abbate et successoribus suis sicut prius habere consuevit Et hoc idem in Curia hic concessit prædictus abbas pro se et successoribus suis inperpetuum Et ista Concordia admittitur si Dominus Rex hoc acceptaverit etc. Postea Dominus Rex mandavit nunciante prædicto Domino Roberto de Tybetot quod Dominus Rex prædictam concordiam acceptavit Ideo prædictus Edmundus ad præsens sine die Salvo jure Domini Regis et hæredum suorum cum inde loqui voluerit.

“Trin. Plac. coram Rege, 21 Edw. I, Rot. 21b.”

[Translation.]

“Wales: The abbot of Strataflorida was complainant to the lord king in his Parliament after Easter, in the twenty-first year of his reign, against Edmund de Mortimer, upon this charge: that the aforesaid Edmund distrained and caused to distrain the same abbot, to compel him to come to his court at Keddenweyn, to the prejudice and disherison of the lord king and to the no small loss and hurt of the same abbot, seeing

that the same abbot is not within the jurisdiction of the aforesaid Edmund. And the lord king appointed Robert de Tybetot and Gilbert de Thornton to hear and determine the aforesaid complaint. And thereupon the lord king, by Richard de Bretvill, who sues for him, and the aforesaid abbot complain that whereas the aforesaid abbot and his predecessors have neither been accustomed to plead nor to be impleaded concerning lands, tenements, possessions, or other pleas before this time, except in the Court of the Prince of Wales, by writs of the same prince or without writ, whose estate the lord king now hath, the aforesaid Edmund has distrained the aforesaid abbot to answer in his court aforesaid concerning divers pleas to the prejudice and disherison of the lord king to the amount of twenty thousand marks, and to the damage of the same abbot. And this they offer to prove, etc.

“And the aforesaid Edmund, by Nicholas de Redingges, his attorney, comes and defends the force and injury when, etc. And he says that he ought not to answer this complaint without the writ of the lord king, because he says that the aforesaid abbot and his predecessors of Strataflorida have been hitherto accustomed to plead and to be impleaded in the Court of Roger de Mortimer, his father, whose heir he is, concerning this manner of pleas. Therefore he prays that he be not put to answer thereof without writ of the lord king. And in that the aforesaid Roger, his father, died seised of this manner of jurisdiction and demesne, he puts himself on his country. And Richard de Bretvill for the lord king, and the aforesaid abbot for himself, say that neither the same abbot nor his predecessors have ever been accustomed to plead or be impleaded in the Court of the aforesaid Roger, father of the aforesaid Edmund, concerning any manner of pleas, nor did the same Roger die seised of this manner of jurisdiction as the aforesaid Edmund says, but the same Edmund was the first who distrained, of his own proper injury and purpresture, against the lord king, the aforesaid abbot to come to the aforesaid Court of the same Edmund, and this they pray may be inquired into by their country, etc. And the aforesaid Edmund likewise. Therefore command is given to Robert Tybetot, Justiciary of West Wales, that he cause to come before the King, within a fortnight of Michaelmas, wheresoever, etc., twelve, etc.; and also to Robert de Staundon, Justiciary of North Wales, that he should cause to come from his bailiwick twelve, etc., at the aforesaid term, etc. And to Owen de la Pole that he should cause to come twelve, etc., from his land of Arestelege. And in like manner a præcipe is sent to the Sheriff



of Salop that he should cause to come twelve, etc., by whom, etc., and who should receive, etc., to recognisance, etc. And because the lord king who now is gave the cantred of Kedenwen by his charter to the aforesaid Roger, father of the aforesaid Edmund, wherein the aforesaid abbot has lands, as is alleged, by which charter the right of the lord king on this behalf perhaps could be declared, it is ordered to the attorney of the aforesaid Edmund that he have the aforesaid charter before the lord king at the aforesaid term, etc., on penalty such as is befitting, etc.; and that the aforesaid abbot, while the aforesaid plea is pending, be not distrained nor molested in anything on that account, etc. And the aforesaid abbot puts in his place brother John Kayov in the aforesaid plea, etc.

"Afterwards, within five weeks of Easter, in the twenty-second year, the aforesaid Edmund comes, and in like manner the aforesaid abbot, and they are agreed by license, and the abbot gives twenty shillings for the license of agreement. And the agreement is such that the aforesaid Edmund recognised and granted for himself and his heirs for ever, that neither the aforesaid abbot nor his successors may be impleaded by the same Edmund and his heirs or any others whomsoever concerning their lands and tenements whatsoever within the demesne of Kedenweyn now lying, unless by writ of the lord king and his heirs in the court of the same king and his heirs. Saving, however, to the same Edmund and his heirs that they, according to the custom of that country formerly in use, should have recognisance of all manner of other pleas not touching lands and tenements concerning the aforesaid abbot and his successors as formerly he used to have. And the aforesaid abbot granted this same thing in the court here for himself and his successors for ever. And this agreement is admitted if the lord king will accept it, etc. Afterwards the lord king ordered, by announcement of the aforesaid Lord Robert de Tybetot, that the lord king accepted the aforesaid agreement. Therefore the aforesaid Edmund [is] at present *sine die*, saving the right of the lord king and his heirs when he will speak thereof.

"Trinity, King's Bench Pleas. 21 Edw. I, Roll 21*b*."

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PARLIAMENTARY PETITIONS FROM ABBOTS OF STRATA FLORIDA.

(A.) No. 7388, P. R. O.

"A son' seign'r et fondour Roi Danglet' prie son Chapelayn Le Abbe de Stretflour' en Galees q'il voille pur Dieu confermer ces Chartres les queux son' pier del alme deqy Dieux eit mercy iadis Roi Danglet' ad conferme."

[Translation.]

"To his lord and founder the King of England, his chaplain the abbot of Strata Florida in Wales, prays that he will for the love of God confirm those charters which his father, formerly King of England, for his soul, for which God have mercy, confirmed."

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(B.)

No. 7391, P. R. O.

"Prie a son seign'r et fundur Rey Denglet'e son Chapeleyn le Abbee de Strattessluyr en Gales qy il veoyle p' charite confermer ceos Chartres les queux furent doneez p' diu'ces princes de Gales et confermez p' le bon Rey Edward le pere le Rey que ore est et ceo prie il pur lalme son peer."

[Translation.]

"To his lord and founder the King of England, his chaplain, the abbot of Strata Florida in Wales, prays that he will by charity confirm those charters which were given by divers princes of Wales, and confirmed by the good King Edward, the father of the King who now is; and this he prays for the soul of his father."

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(C.)

No. 7395, P. R. O.

"A son fou'dour et seign'r Roy Denglet're Moustr' son chapeleyn Labbe de Strattfluyr en Gales issint com il tynt aschiun t'res et ten'z en les p'ties de South Gales en pure et p'petuel agmoyn' de q'l agmoyn' nuyt suyte ne deyt estr' fet ne porq'ant Le Constable de Cardigan lauanddist Abbe pur suyt fere au Cou'te de Cardigan greunouseme't destreynt et en g'ant da'mage de lauanddist Abbe et encou'tr' la forme de son feffem't. Pur q'i lauanddist Abbe p'le a son seign'r et fou'dour Roy Denglet'e auau'tnome q' ceos ch'res seynt regardes de les auau'tdistes t'res et q' son' seign'r et fou'dour Roy Denglet'e p' sa ch're ly voyle remedie fer' solonq' le purporte de ces Munime's."

[Translation.]

"To his founder and lord the King of England, sheweth his chaplain, the abbot of Strata Florida, in Wales, thus. Whereas he holds certain lands and tenements in the parts of South Wales, in pure and perpetual alms, for which alms no suit or debt is to be made, nevertheless the constable of Cardigan grievously distrains the aforesaid abbot to do suit at the County Court of Cardigan, both to the great damage of the aforesaid

abbot, and against the form of his feoffment. For which the aforesaid abbot prays his lord and founder, the King of England aforesaid, that those charters of the aforesaid lands may be regarded, and that his lord and founder the King of England by his charter, will cause him a remedy according to the purport of those muniments."

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(D.)

No. 7282, P. R. O.

"A n're seign'r le Roi et a son Councail mustre le soen Chapeleyn Labbe de Stretflur en Gales q' come le dit Abbe et ses p'decessours et leurs tenaunz de touz maners ples et quereles eux touchant deynent pleder et auer droit en la Court le Roi a Lampader et qu' n're dit seign'r le Roi fyns an'ciamens et touz autres p'fitz de mesme les plees s'daunz ad eu de tot temps passe puy le conquete tancq' cea come coe q' est app'tinaunt [a r]eal iurisdiccion et denant le conquete les Princes de Gales foundours de la dite meson furent seises de mesmes les plees et p'fitz et nul altre. La vynt un Rob't Clement p' colour de une Chartre q'il ad de n're dit seign'r le Roi q' mort est q' Dieu lassoille du Co'mot de Pennarth' od les app'tinauntz et demant dutdit Abbe et ses tenaunz conisaunces des touz plees et plusours extorsions et meschiefs fait s'r les ditz tenauntz en countre lestat n're dit seign'r le Roi et de sa Coroune et a g'ant damage du dit Abbe et de sa meson s'r quele chose Labbe p'rchasa brief n're dit seign'r le Roi a mous' Gilb't Talbot Justic' de Gales q' lui freit droit eaunt regard' a lestat le Roi. P' v'tue de queu brif' le Justic' fist venir deuant lui les p'tyes a c'teyn Jour a quen Jour Labbe vynt et dist p'r le Roi qu' lui et ses p'decessours et lo'r tenaunz de tot temps passe des tous man'es des plees et quereles eux tochaunz soleyent et deivent estre reponauns en la Court le Roi a Lampader et des issues et an'ciamens des ditz plees n're dit seign'r le Roi adeste s'uy come sus est dit. Et le dit Rob't Vynt et dist q'il est seign'r de la Co'mot de Pennarth' p' don et chartre le Roi et q' touz q' sont residons deinz sa dite Co'mote deynent venir a sa Court' de Pennarth' et p' cele en cheson il demand' du dit Abbe et ses tenaunz conisaunces des totes man'es plees, et le dit Abbe dit p'r le Roi q' p' v'tue de ceste chartre n're dit seign'r le Roi ne s'ra forbarre des conisaunces de tieux plees et q' la meson de Stretflur fust fondee de temps dount ynyad memorie et de coe temps les p'nces de Gales furent seises des touz' man'es des plees tochaunz le dit Abbe et ses tenaunz auantditz tancq' q' le ael n're seign'r le Roi conq'st la t're de Gales et puy la conquete tancq' cea n're dit seign'r et ses auncestres onnt eu

conisaunces des touz ptees soutzdzits de fyns et am'ciamens come coe q'est app'rtinaunt a real iurisdiction et s'r coe la enqueste est iunte entre les p'ties denant le Justic' p' q'i le dit Rob't de nouel ad p'chace co'fermement s'r sa Chartre od la clause, *Licet ipse etc.*, p' quele clause il entent forbarrer n're dit seign'r de son droit et delayer lenq'ste en desl'iteson n'tre dit seign'r et en pourciment de la dite meson. Prie le dit Abbe a n're dit seign'r le Roi et a son conseil q' lui pleise mander au dit Justic' de Gales q' nyent contreteant la dite Chartre de confirm' q'il aile auant a Lenq'este p'ndre sauant lestat le Roi et de sa meson en touz poyntz nyent contreteant nulle brief' de p'ue seal ne de g'ant seal solonc le statut nadgiers fait a North' ou ordyner altre remedie p'r le Roi et sa meson."

[Translation.]

"To our lord the King and to his council, his chaplain, the abbot of Strata Florida, sheweth. That whereas the said abbot and his predecessors and their tenants ought to plead all manner of pleas and writs touching them, and to have right in the Court of the King at Lampader, and that our said lord the King has had the fines, amercements, and all other profits arising from the same pleas for all the time passed since the conquest until this time, as that which is pertaining to regal jurisdiction, and before the conquest the princes of Wales, founders of the said house, were seised of the same pleas and profits, and no other. There came one Robert Clement, by colour of a charter which he had from our said lord the King, who is dead, on whom God have mercy, of the commote of Pennarth, with the appurtenances, and demanded of the said abbot and his tenants cognisances of all pleas, and made many extortions and mischiefs upon the said tenants against the estate of our said lord the King and of his crown, and to the great damage of the said abbot and of his house. Upon which the abbot acquired a writ of our said lord the King to Master Gilbert Talbot, Justiciary of Wales, that he should do right to him, having regard to the estate of the King. By virtue of which writ the Justiciary caused the parties to come before him at a certain day.

"At which day the abbot came, and said for the king that he and his predecessors and their tenants for all time past used and ought to answer all manner of pleas and suits touching them in the King's Court at Lampader; and our said lord the King has been paid the issues and amercements of the said pleas as is aforesaid.

"And the said Robert came and said that he is lord of the

commote of Pennarth by the gift and charter of the King, and that all who are resident within his said Commote ought to come to his Court of Pennarth; and by this being called in question, he demanded of the said abbot and his tenants cognisances of all manner of pleas.

“And the said abbot said for the King, that by virtue of this charter our said lord the King shall not be excluded from the cognisances of all pleas, and that the house of Strata Florida was founded at a time of which there is not memory; and from that time the princes of Wales were seized of all manner of pleas touching the said abbey, and their tenants aforesaid, until the grandfather of our lord the King conquered the land of Wales; and since the conquest until this time our said lord and his ancestors have had cognisances of all the pleas aforesaid for fines and amercements, as that which is pertaining to regal jurisdiction.

“And upon that the inquiry is joined between the parties before the Justiciary, because the said Robert has acquired anew a confirmation under his charter, with the clause *Licet ipse, etc.* By which clause he intended to exclude our said lord of his right, and to delay the inquiry to the disinheritance of our said lord, and to the impoverishment of the said house.

“The said abbot prays our said lord the King and his council that it may please him to command the said Justiciary of Wales that notwithstanding the said charter of confirmation, that he go before to take the inquiry, saving the estate of the King and of his house on all points, notwithstanding any writ of privy seal nor of great seal, according to the statute formerly made at Northampton, or to ordain another remedy for the King and his house.”

(E.)

No. 7498, P. R. O

“A n're tresredoute et t'sg'acieuse s'r le Roy et son tressage conseil en ceste p'sent p'liament supplient humblement Johan Labbe de Stratflure en Southgales et son' Couent . . . . meason est de la fundacion' les progenitoss n're dit s'r le Roi et de son' p'r'onage q' come Iohan ap Rees Abbe de Coneway en Northgales ouesqe autres de son . . . . oue g'and route de gentz armez et Archiers vynt a la d'ce Abbeye de Stratflure en le my quarisme lan du regne n're dit s'r le Roi sisme et mesme labb . . . . a forte et en man'e de guerre p' quarantions et ne soeffri point les ditz suppliantz entre deinz mesme labbey p'r diuines s'uices faire et auxi emprison . . . . plus'os de dit Couent illeog's et les en prisone longement detient et les estores

et touz man'es de vitailles illeog's trouez degasterent. Et ap's les x . . . le dit Abbe de Coneway et les aut's mesfes'os p' son' asse[nt] pristerent et emporterent de mesme labbey de Stratflure touz les liuers vestimentz orn . . . argent et lo'r co'e seal et touz les autres moebles illeog's trouez et auxint chacerent dilleog's lo'r chiuals Jumentes boefs vaches motons berbetz et touz man'es de bestails illeog's trouez a la value et pris de deux Myll' marez et auxint de dit Abbe de Coneway ad faite faire plus'os obligacions de Granges et fermes et de g'andes so'mes d'argent as diu'ses p'sones desouz le d'ce seal p' queles obligacions les ditz suppliantz ount estes et sont greusement empledez a g'and' anyentisement et destruccion' de la d'ce meason' et les ditz suppliantz.

Please a n're dit s'r le Roy et son dit conseil ent ordeign' remede p'r Dieux et en oeuvre de charite Considerantz q' les ditz suppliantz ne poont my auoir nul recon'er p' la co'e ley Denglet're ne p' les leyes usages ne custumes de Gales en nul man'e a cause q' le dit Abbe de Coneway nadriens en South-gales do'nt estre iustefiee p'r les g'andes et horribles trespas susditz."

[Translation.]

"To our most dread and gracious lord the King and his most wise council in this present Parliament, humbly supplicating, John, abbot of Strata Florida, and his convent . . . house is of the foundation of the progenitors of our said lord the King, and of his patronage. That whereas John ap Rees, the abbot of Conway, in North Wales, with others of his . . . with a great band of armed men and archers, came to the said abbey of Strata Florida, in Mid Lent of the 6th year of the reign of our said lord the King, and . . . the same abbot by force and in the manner of war for forty days, and did not suffer the said suppliants to enter within the same abbey to perform divine services, and also imprisoned many of the said convent, and detained them in prison for a long time, and wasted the stores and all manner of victuals there found. And after the . . . the said abbot of Conway, and the other criminals, took and carried away from the said abbey of Strata Florida all the vestments, clothes (ornaments), money, and their common seal, and all the other movables there found; and they also drove away from the same place their horses, mares, oxen, cows, sheep, ewes, and all manner of beasts there found, to the value and price of two thousand marks. And also the said abbot of Conway has caused many obligations to be made of the granges and farms, and of great sums of money, to

divers persons under the said seal ; by the which obligations the said suppliants have been and are grievously impleaded, to the great impoverishment and destruction of the said house, and of the said suppliants.

“May it please our said lord the King and his said Council to ordain a remedy therein, for the love of God, and in a work of charity, considering that the same suppliants can have no recovery in the meantime by the common law of England, nor by the laws, usages, or customs of Wales, in any manner, because the said abbot of Conway has nothing in South Wales from whence to be justified for the great and horrible trespass aforesaid.”

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(F.)

*Harley Charter 75, A. 11.*

“Henricus dei gracia Rex Anglie et Francie et Dominus Hibernie. Predilecto et fideli nostro Jacobo Domino de Audeley ac dilectis et fidelibus nostris Johanni Stanley Armigero Philippo ap Res Decretorum Doctori Mereduth ap Oweyn Jevan ap Jankyn Armigeris Johanni ap Res ap Thomas . Willelmo Burghull’ et Res ap Mereduth ap Oweyn et eorum cuilibet salutem. Scire vos volumus quod literas sub magno sigillo nostro fieri fecimus sub hac forma. Henricus dei gracia Rex Anglie et Francie et Dominus Hibernie Omnibus ad quos presentes litere pervenerint salutem. Ex parte Willelmi Morys dicentis se Abbatem Abbacie de Strata fflorida de ordine Cisterciensi in Menevensi diocesi nobis est graviter conquerendo monstratum quod cum abbacia illa de fundacione nobilium progenitorum nostrorum quondam principum Wallie et nostro patronatu existat et licet idem Willelmus vacante nuper Abbacia illa per mortem cujusdam Res nuper Abbatis ejusdem ac pastoris solacio destituta Requisitis solempnitatibus in ea parte requirendis per Priorem et Conuentum dicti Loci in Abbatem et Pastorem ejusdem canonice electus et creatus et per quosdam David Abbatem de Whitlond patrem Abbatem dicte Abbacie de Strata fflorida et quendam Johannem ap Res tunc Abbatem de Kymer ordine Cisterciensi observato ibidem installatus eleccionemque creacionem et installacionem hujusmodi per quosdam eciam Johannem Abbatem de Bildwos et Thomam Abbatem de Morgan dicte ordinis Cisterciensis visitatores ut asseritur realiter confirmatus extitisset necnon possessionem ejusdem Abbacie cum suis juribus et pertinenciis univrsis per biennium et ultra absque ulla interrupcione adeptus fuisset pacifice et quiete . prefatus tamen Johannes ap Res machinans dictum Willelmum Morys a possessione sua Ablacie sue prediete sub-

dole expellere et amovere quandam suggestionem ut dicitur minus veram nobis protulit sub hac forma quod licet idem Johannes per deposicionem prefati Willelmi Morys nuper Abbatis de Strata florida in Abbatem Loci illius rite et canonice extitit electus creatus et installatus et in realem possessionem ejusdem inductus dictum tamen Willelmum Morys post hujusmodi deposicionem pretensam Abbaciam illam injuste occupasse ac nonnulla dampna et detrimenta eidem Abbacie asseruit perpetrasse in ipsius Abbacie dispendium non modicum et gravamen. Super qua quidem suggestione dicti Johannis ap Res supposita fore vera, Nos in favorem suggestionis hujusmodi et specialiter in subvencionem Abbacie predictae literas nostras patentes certis personis in eisdem specificatis direximus tintorias, Abbaciamque illam sub proteccionem tuicione et defensione nostris eisdem personis ad tempus commisimus conservanda quarum quidem literarum nostrarum vigore predictus Johannes ap Res aggregatis sibi quampluribus malefactoribus et pacis nostre perturbatoribus Abbaciam de Strata florida predictam . cum non modica potencia non adm[issus] est violenter intravit contra pacem nostram ipsamque Abbaciam de bonis rebus et jocalibus suis adtunc ibidem spoliavit ac prefatum Willelmum Morys necnon quosdam commonachos suos ab eadem nedum expulit et ejecit, verumeciam ad Castrum de Abrustuth ibidem imprisonandos duci fecit et ibidem diris carceribus mancipatos maliciose custodiri procuravit quousque justicia suadente per quendam Willelmum Thomas extiterant liberati idemque Johannes ap Res Abbaciam predictam extunc manu forti destinet in presenti in divini cultus deterioracionem prefatique Willelmi Morys injuriam dampnum et depauperacionem necnon prefate Abbacie adnichilacionem et desolacionem manifesta ut accepimus unde idem Willelmus nobis humiliter supplicavit sibi et Abbacie predictae de remedio congruo in hac parte providere. Nos supplicacioni sue hujusmodi in quantum cum justicia poterimus equanimiter inclinati volentes indempnitati et relevacioni dicti Abbacie nostre de Strata<sup>1</sup> florida ne divinus cultus inibi depereat aut alia incommoda propter contenciones predictas eveniant ad eandem ipsam Abbaciam ac religiosos ejusdem ibidem Deo famulantes et famulaturis necnon omnia et singula terras tenementa redditus res bona catalla et possessiones quaecunque ad eandem Abbaciam pertinencia sive spectancia pendentibus lite et controversia inter predictos Willelmum et Johannem Abbates se pretendentes indiscussis in proteccionem

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<sup>1</sup> Stratra, MS.



tuicionem et defensionem nostras suscepimus speciales omnibus et singulis inhiibentes ne quis Abbacie predictae aut religiosis ibidem Deo servientibus et servituris terris tenementis redditibus rebus bonis catallis aut aliquibus possessionibus ad eandem spectantibus sive pertinentibus injuriam molestiam dampnum aliquamiter inferat seu gravamen nec quicquam aliud ibidem quod in pacis nostre lesionem cedere valeat faciat vel attemptet quovis modo sub pena indignacionis nostre. Et pro majori securitate ejusdem Abbacie pertinentiarumque suarum necnon religiosorum ejusdem ibidem Deo serviencium et servitutorum. Ut ipsi eo securius valeant ibidem morari et omnipotenti Deo quocius famulari commisimus dilectis nobis in Christo Thome Abbati de Morgan reformatori dicti ordinis Cisterciensis in partibus Wallensibus et David Abbati de Whitelond antedictis custodiam regimen et gubernacionem dicte Abbacie nostre de Strata florida ac omnium terrarum tenementorum reddituum rerum bonorum catallorum et possessionum quorumcumque pertinentium sive spectantium ad eandem. Habenda sibi quamdiu Abbacia illa sub proteccione tuicione et defensione nostris propter contencionem predictam indiscussam contigerit remanere. Proviso semper quod dicti Abbates de Morgan et Whitelonde bona et revenciones dicte Abbacie nostre de Strata florida in quantum possibile est eisdem absque vasto seu dissipacione eorundem pro indemnitate dicte Domus fideliter conservent et faciant conservari. Sic in speciali quod neutri dictorum Willelmi et Johannis pro jure illius Abbacie nostre sic contendencium de bonis et revencionibus ejusdem Abbacie quicquam ministretur nec per eosdem contententes aut eorum alterum aut alienjus alterius ipsorum nomine aliquid de eisdem bonis et revencionibus capi expendi aut ministrari qu[ ] permittatur. Sed quod dicti Abbates de Morgan et Whitelonde cum bonis et revencionibus hujusmodi Abbaciam nostram predictam ac religiosos ibidem Deo servientes et servituros necnon divinum cultum in eadem regant gubernent manuteneant et sustentent quodque ipsi omnium bonorum mobilium dicte Abbacie nostre fidele inventarium inter se et Conventum ejusdem indentatum quamcitius commode facere possunt faciant et bona illa ad usum prefate Abbacie nostre tantum prout nobis inde respondere voluerint fideliter custodiant et conservent ac quicquid boni eidem Abbacie nostre facere vel procurare valeant dum sic custodiam regimen et gubernacionem illa habuerint juxta posse suum faciant et procurent. Damus autem universis et singulis Justiciariis Vicecomitibus Escaetoribus Ballivis et ministris nostris Comitatus de Cardigan in Suthwallia et aliis quibuscumque quorum interest tenore presencium firmiter in mandatis quod

prefatis Abbatibus de Morgan et Whitelond Commissariis nostris in hac parte in execucione premissorum intendentes consulentes favorabiles sint et auxiliantes prout decet et necessitas rei expostulat et requirit. In cujus rei testimonium has literas nostras fieri fecimus patentes. Teste me ipso apud Westmonasterium xviii die Februarii Anno regni nostri vicesimo primo. Vobis igitur mandamus quod nichil in contrarium hujus ordinationis nostre attemptetis nec attemptari seu procurari faciatis nec aliquis vestrum attemptet seu procuret quovis modo sed dictos Abbates de Morgan et de Whitelond custodiam regimen et gubernacionem dicte Abbacie nostre de Strata florida ac omnium terrarum tenementorum reddituum rerum bonorum catallorum et possessionum quorumcumque pertinencium sive spectancium ad eandem nostram Abbaciam libere et quiete regere et gubernare permittatis juxta vim formam et effectum literarum nostrarum patencium predictarum. Datum sub privato sigillo nostro apud Manerium nostrum de Shene tercio die Marcii Anno regni nostri vicesimo primo.”

[Translation.]

“Henry, by the grace of God King of England and France and Lord of Ireland. To our well-beloved and faithful James, Lord of Audeley, and to our beloved and faithful John Stanley, Esquire, Philip ap Res, Doctor of Decrees, Mereduth ap Oweyn, Jevan ap Jankyn, Esquires, John ap Res ap Thomas, William Burghulle, and Res ap Mereduth ap Oweyn, and to any soever of them, greeting.

“We will you should know that we have caused to be made letters under our great seal after this form :—

“Henry, by the grace of God King of England and France and Lord of Ireland, To all unto whom the present letters shall have come, greeting. On behalf of William Morys, calling himself Abbot of the Abbey of Strata Florida, of the Cistercian Order in the Diocese of St. David’s, by heavily complaining it has been shown to us that whereas that abbey exists by the foundation of our noble progenitors, formerly princes of Wales and our patronage; and although the same William (that abbey being lately vacant by the death of a certain Res, late abbot thereof, and deprived of the solace of a pastor), the solemnities which are required on that behalf having been performed, was canonically elected and created by the prior and convent of the said place to be abbot and pastor thereof, and by a certain David, Abbot of Whitland, father Abbot of the said Abbey of Strata

Florida, and a certain John ap Res, then Abbot of Kymer,<sup>1</sup> with observance of the Cistercian Order, therein installed, had been, as is asserted, really confirmed as to election, creation, and installation after this manner by certain, to wit, John, Abbot of Buildwas, and Thomas, Abbot of Margam, visitors of the said Cistercian order; moreover, he had acquired possession of the same abbey, with its universal rights and appurtenances, for two years and upwards without any interruption, peacefully and quietly. Nevertheless, the aforesaid John ap Res, plotting craftily to expel and amove the said William Morys from his possession of his Abbey aforesaid, put before us a certain allegation without truth, as is declared, after this form, that although the same John, by the deposition of the aforesaid William Morys, late Abbot of Strata Florida, was rightfully and canonically elected, created, and installed as Abbot of that place, and inducted into the real possession thereof, yet the said William Morys, after this manner of pretended deposition, had occupied that abbey unjustly, and he asserts that he perpetrated sundry damages and detrimments upon the same abbey, to the no small expense and harm of that abbey. In support, indeed, of which allegation of the said John ap Res, supposed to be true, we, in favour of this manner of allegation, and especially to the assistance of the Abbey aforesaid, directed our illuminated letters patent to certain persons therein specified, and committed that abbey under our protection, guidance and defence, for a time to the same persons; by virtue indeed of which our letters the aforesaid John ap Res (many malefactors and perturbers of our peace having banded themselves together with him), not having admission, violently entered with no small power the aforesaid Abbey of Strata Florida, against our peace, and despoiled that abbey of its goods, possessions, and jewels at that time therein, and not only expelled and ejected the aforesaid William Morys and as well certain of his fellow monks from the same, but also caused them to be taken to the Castle of Aberystwith, therein to be imprisoned, and maliciously procured that they should be kept in custody therein, being committed to dismal prisons, until, by the persuasion of justice they were set free by a certain William Thomas; and the same John ap Res from that time forward held possession of the aforesaid Abbey by main force, and thus holds it at the present time, to the deterioration of divine worship, and to the injury, loss, and depauperisation of the aforesaid William Morys, as well as the annihilation and manifest desolation of the aforesaid Abbey, as we understand; where-

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<sup>1</sup> Conway in the Petition.

upon the same William has humbly supplicated us to provide for himself and the Abbey aforesaid a suitable remedy on this behalf. We justly inclined to his supplication in this manner as far as we can with justice, wishing for the indemnity and relief of our said Abbey of Strata Florida, lest divine worship therein perish, or other troubles ensue, on account of the contentions aforesaid, to that same Abbey and the religious thereof serving and about to serve God therein, also have taken all and singular the lands, tenements, rents, property, goods, chattels, and possessions whatsoever, appertaining to the same abbey, or belonging (while the strife and controversy between the aforesaid William and John, claiming that they are abbots, are pending undetermined) under our especial protection, guidance, and defence, inhibiting all and singular that no one in any manner bring upon the abbey aforesaid, or the religious serving and about to serve God therein, in the lands, tenements, rents, property, goods, chattels, or any manner of possessions, belonging or appertaining to the same, injury, molestation, loss, nor hardship, nor any other thing therein do or attempt to do which may turn to the breaking of our peace in any manner, under penalty of our indignation. And for the greater security of the same abbey and of its appurtenances, as well as of the religious thereof serving and about to serve God therein, that they may be able thereby to dwell the more securely therein and to serve Almighty God the more quietly, we have committed to our beloved in Christ, the above-mentioned Thomas, Abbot of Margam, reformer of the said Cistercian Order in the parts of Wales, and to David, Abbot of Whitelond, the rule and government of the said Abbey of Strata Florida, and of all the lands, tenements, rents, property, goods, chattels, and possessions whatsoever appertaining or belonging to the same; to hold to themselves as long as that abbey shall have happened to remain under our protection, guidance, and defence, on account of the aforesaid undetermined contention. Provided always that the said Abbots of Margam and Whitelond faithfully preserve, and cause to be preserved, the goods and revenues of our said Abbey of Strata Florida, as far as is possible, to the same, for the indemnity of the said house; and in such manner especially that neither of the said William and John, thus contending for the right of that our abbey, may administer aught of the goods and revenues thereof, nor by the same contenders, or either of them, or in the name of either of them whosoever, aught of the same goods and possessions be allowed [in any wise] to be taken, expended, or administered.

“ But that the said Abbots of Margam and Whitelond rule,

govern, maintain, and sustain, out of the goods and revenues of this kind, our aforesaid abbey and the religious therein serving and about to serve God, and also divine worship in the same: and that they make as quickly as they are conveniently able so to do, a faithful inventory indented between themselves and the convent thereof, of all the movable goods of our said abbey, and faithfully keep and preserve those goods to the use of our aforesaid abbey just in such manner as they would answer to us therefor; and do and procure to the best of their power whatever good they are able to do or procure to the same our abbey, while thus they have had the custody, rule, and government thereof. Moreover, we do give to all and singular our justices, sheriffs, escheators, bailiffs, and ministers of the county of Cardigan in South Wales, and to others whosoever it concerns, by the tenor of these presents, strict command that to the aforesaid Abbots of Margam and Whitelond, our commissaries on this behalf, they be helping, advising, and favourable in the performance of the premisses, and aiding as far as is seemly, and as the necessity of the matter demands and requires. In witness whereof we have caused these our letters to be made patent. Witness myself at Westminster, on the eighteenth day of February, in the twenty-first year of our reign. To you, therefore, we command that ye attempt nothing to the contrary of this our ordinance, nor cause aught to be attempted or procured, nor any of you attempt or procure in any wise whatsoever, but suffer the said Abbots of Margam and Whitelond freely and quietly to rule and govern the custody, rule, and government of our said Abbey of Strata Florida, and of all the lands, tenements, rents, property, goods, chattels, and possessions whatsoever appertaining or belonging to the same our abbey, in accordance with the force, form, and effect of our letters patent aforesaid. Given under our privy seal at our Manor of Shene, on the third day of March, in the twenty-first year of our reign.”<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> 21st Henry VI, A.D. 1443.

DOCUMENTS RELATING TO DESTRUCTION OF  
MONASTERY, *TEMP.* EDWARD I.

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*Translation of Charter of Edward I.*

“The King to all those to whom these presents shall come, Greeting. Know ye, that we have given permission to our beloved in Christ, the Abbot and Convent of Strata Florida, that on the spot on which their abbey of Strata Florida was lately burnt in the Welsh war, in the twenty-third year of our reign, contrary to our wishes, they may construct afresh, and re-build their house, and dwell there for the continual service of Almighty God. Provided that the thickets be cut down, and the roads be mended, in the neighbourhood of the place aforesaid, under the direction of our Justiciary of West Wales, for the purpose of avoiding the dangers which may hereafter happen by means of those woods, and the hazards of those roads. In testimony whereof, &c. Given by the King at Westminster, the 30th day of March.

“Proclaimed by order of the King himself by Otho de Grandison.”

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EXTRACTS FROM RYMER'S “FOEDERA”.

Tom. 2, page 292.

“A.D. 1284. An. 12. E. I. L. A., f. 362a. Penes Camerar.

“Pro damnis tempore Guerræ domui de Strata Florida illatis.

“Omnibus, ad quos præsentēs litteræ pervenerint, Fratres G. and J. Procuratores Domini Abbatis & Conventus de Strata Florida, salutem in Domino.

“Quum Magnificus Princeps Dominus noster Edwardus, Dei gratia, illustris Rex Angliæ pro dampnis & oppressionibus, nostræ Domui tempore Guerræ præteritæ illatis, sua largiflua bonitate, septuaginta octo Libr. Sterlingorum nobis de elemosina sua contulit per manus inquisitorum, scilicet, Prioris Radolam, & Gardiani de Lamaes, & Domini R. de Brochton.

“Prædictum autem Dominum Regem super prædictis septuaginta octo Libris pro omnibus dampnis nobis & Domui nostræ illatis quietum clamamus imperpetuum per præsentēs.

“Et, quia Sigillum proprii Abbatis tunc temporis non habuimus, Sigilla Venerabilium de Est. Marschell, & de Lyn Egwestel Abbatum, in testimonium, præsentibus procuravimus apponi.

"Dat. in Abbathia Cestrie in crastino Animarum, anno Regni Regis Edwardi 12."

"A.D. 1284. An. 12. E. 1. L. A., f. 359a. Penes Camerar.

"De Pecunia Abbati de Strata Florida, soluta pro damnis tempore Guerræ præteritæ illatis.

"Omnibus, ad quos præsentēs litteræ pervenerint, Frater A. dictus Abbas de Strata Florida, & ejusdem loci conventus, salutem in Domino.

"Quum Magnificus Princeps, noster, Dominus Edwardus, Dei gratiâ, illustris Rex Angliæ, pro dampnis & oppressionibus, nostræ Domui, tempore Guerræ, præteritæ illatis, sua largiflua bonitate, septuaginta & octo Libras Sterlingorum nobis de elemosina sua contulit, per manus inquisitorum, scilicet.

"Prioris Rodel, & Gardiani de Lan Maes, & Domini R. de Brochton.

"Prædictum autem Dominum Regem, super prædictas septuaginta & octo Libris, pro omnibus dampnis nobis illatis, quietum clamamus in perpetuum per præsentēs.

"In cujus rei testimonium huic scripto patenti Sigillum nostrum apposuimus.

"Datum anno Domini 1284."

[Translation.]

"A.D. 1284. An. 12. E. I. L. A. f. 362a. In the possession of the Chamberlain.

"For damages inflicted in the time of the war upon the House of Strata Florida.

"To all to whom these present letters shall come, the Brothers G. and J., Proctors of the lord abbot and the convent of Strata Florida, greeting in the Lord. Whereas the mighty prince, our Lord Edward, by the grace of God, the illustrious King of England, conferred upon us, of his alms, Seventy-eight pounds stg. by his bountiful goodness, by the hands of the inquisitors, to wit, the prior of Rhuddlam, and the warden of Lamaes, and the Lord R. de Brochton, for the damages and oppressions inflicted upon our House in the time of the past war.

"And we acquit the aforesaid Lord the King concerning the aforesaid seventy-eight pounds for all the damages inflicted upon us and our House for ever by these presents.

"And because we had not the seal of the then proper abbot of the time, we have procured to be put, in witness to these presents, the seals of the venerable abbots of Est. Marschell and of Lyn Egwestel. Dated in the abbey of Chester on the

morrow of All Souls, in the 12th year of the reign of King Edward. [3 November, A.D. 1284.]”

“A.D. 1284. An. 12. E. I. L. A., f. 359a. In the possession of the Chamberlain.

“Concerning the money paid to the abbot of Strata Florida for damages inflicted in the time of the past war.

“To all to whom these present letters shall come, Brother A., the said abbot of Strata Florida, and the convent of the same place, greeting in the Lord.

“Whereas our mighty prince the Lord Edward, by the grace of God, the illustrious King of England, conferred upon us, of his alms, Seventy-eight pounds stg. by his bountiful goodness, by the hands of the inquisitors, to wit, the prior of Rodel, and the warden of Lan Maes, and the Lord R. de Brochton, for the damages and oppressions inflicted upon our House in the time of the past war.

“And we acquit the aforesaid Lord the King concerning the aforesaid Seventy-eight pounds for all the damages inflicted upon us, for ever by these presents.

“In witness of which thing we have put our seal to this writing patent.

“Dated in the year of our Lord 1284.”

#### AGREEMENT AS TO TITHES (1339).

*British Museum, Harley MS. 1249, f. 76b.*

“In Dei Nomine Amen. Anno ab Incarnatione ejusdem Mille-simo ccc<sup>mo</sup> tricesimo Nono vicesimo primo die Mensis Martii ad perpetuam rei memoriam inter venerandum in Christo patrem Dominum Henricum Dei gratia Menevensem Episcopum et ejus capitulum Menevense Necnon et Capitulum de Abergwylylen’ et de Landewybrevy et præbendarios eorundem Necnon et præbendarios de Lanondevery Langamarth Readr Carom Lanrustad Lampadarnodyn Lannorth Trefgloys Estrat ac Ecclesiarum de Bettous Bletherous et Sullen Rectores et quoscunque alios præbendarios Rectores et Vicarios ad jus patronatus Episcopi Menevensis spectantes vel quorum Rectoria vel Vicaria spectaverit vel eorum altera ex parte una, et Abbatem et Conventum Monasterii de Strataflorida Cisterciensis ordinis Menevensis Diocesis ex altera . Ad sedandam discordiam inter eosdem motam pro se et Successoribus suis est unanimiter in hunc modum concordatum videlicet.

“Quod Præbendarii Rectores et Vicarii præbendarum Ecclesiarum prædictarum et eorum Successores et ceteri qui-



cunque ad collationem Episcopi spectantes vel ejus Rectoria vel Vicaria spectaverit in eorundem singulis parochiis percipient de omnibus et singulis tenentibus præsentibus et futuris dicti Abbatis et Conventus tam colonis partiariis<sup>1</sup> quam censualibus duas partes decimarum garbarum, fœni, agnorum, vitulorum, pullanorum, porcellorum, Lanæ, lini, casei, et decimarum privatarum vulgariter Priuethegom nuncupatarum ceteras quoque decimas minutas superius non expressas integraliter percipient prædicti præbendarii Rectores et Vicarii et prædicti Abbas et Conventus de Strataflorida quia manifestæ paupertatis onere premuntur tertiam partem percipiant decimarum prædictarum specificatarum tenentium suorum prædictorum pro se et successoribus suis. Omnes vero oblationes ad prædictas Ecclesias et præbendas provenientes præbendarii Rectores et Vicarii eorundem integraliter percipiant prout Juri Communi consonum esse dinoscitur.

“Si vero aliqui ad Monasterium dictæ Abbatiae seu capellas ejusdem videlicet Sancti Paulini et Sancti Madoci causa devotionis accesserint ibidem oblationes aliquas faciendo, dicti Abbas et Conventus et eorum successores integraliter easdem percipiant et prædicti Coloni et Tenentes omnibus diebus anni quibus alii in præbendis et Ecclesiis prædictis offerre consueverint et debuerint oblationes debitas sicut parochiani dictorum locorum offerre in eisdem teneantur prædicti vero præbendarii Rectores et Vicarii præfatis Colonis teneantur Sacramenta et Sacramentalia ministrare et de servientibus Monasterii infra Curtam commorantibus Rectores vel Vicarii quicunque Decimas exigere non presumant ratione terrarum seu rerum quas infra eandem curtam optinent.

“Et si contingat dictos Abbatem et Conventum vel eorum successores dictos Episcopum Capitula Rectores et Vicarios vel aliquem eorundem in perceptione prædictarum decimarum prout superius specificatum est molestare perturbare vel in aliquo huic paginae per se vel per alios contravenire iidem Abbas et Conventus obligant se et successores suos ac Monasterium suum prædictum in decem libris legalis monetæ fabrice Ecclesiæ beati (*sic*) Mariæ de Arcubus London nomine puri debiti solvendis una cum dampnis et expensis quæ et quas sustinuerint Episcopus Capitula præbendarii Rectores et Vicarii supradicti seu aliquis eorundem ratione injustæ detentionis seu spoliationis et obventionum prædictarum quotiens in aliquo contravenirent præmissis vel alicui præmissorum. Principali pacto in suo robore nichilominus permanente quacunque exceptione personis suis vel

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<sup>1</sup> Porciariis, *margin.*

ordini eorundem concessa non obstante. Cujus exemptionis privilegiis quibuscunque eisdem religiosis et eorum ordini ut premititur concessis . . . quoad præmissa omnia duntaxat firmiter observanda dicti Abbas et Conventus pro se et successoribus suis expresse renuntiant per presentes.

“ Et prædicti Episcopus Capitula Rectores et Vicarii pro se et successoribus suis omnibus et singulis Accionibus et demandis quas ante confectionem presentium habuerint vel habere poterint seu poterit aliquis eorum occasione præmissorum contra dictos religiosos renuntiant et renuntiat quolibet eorum per presentes.

“ Et si contingat dictos Episcopum Capitula Rectores et Vicarios seu aliquem eorundem aut eorum Successores dictam concordiam infringere violare aut contravenire quoquomodo volunt et concedunt et se obligant specialiter quod infringens vel contraveniens in præmissis vel aliquo præmissorum teneatur et obligetur in decem Libris legalis monetæ fabricæ Ecclesiæ beatæ Mariæ de Arcubus nomine puri debiti solvendis una cum dampnis et expensis quæ et quas sustinuerint prædicti Abbas et Conventus seu eorum successores ratione violationis seu non observationis concordie prædictæ principali pacto nichilominus in suo robore duraturo. In quorum omnium testimonium Sigillum dicti venerandi patris Domini Henrici Episcopi Menevensis una cum Sigillo Communi Capituli Menevensis ex Parte una et Sigillum commune dictorum Abbatis et conventus ex parte altera huic presenti Indenturæ sunt appositæ Datum apud Stratam floridam vicesimo primo die mensis Martii Anno Domini Millesimo ccc<sup>mo</sup> tricesimo Nono.”

[Translation.]

“ In the name of God, Amen. In the year of the Incarnation of the same, one thousand three hundred and thirty-nine, on the twenty-first day of the month of March, for the perpetual memory of the matter between the venerable father in Christ, Lord Henry, by the grace of God, Bishop of St. David's, and his Chapter of St. David's, and also the Chapter of Aber-gwyly and of Landewylbrey and the prebendaries thereof, and also the prebendaries of Lanondevery, Langamarth, Readr, Carom, Lannrustad, Lampadarnodyn, Lannorth, Trefeglwys, Estrat, and the rectors of the churches of Bettous, Bletherous, and Sullen, and certain other prebendaries, rectors, and vicars, belonging to the right of patronage of the Bishop of St. David's, or whose rectory or vicarage belongs, or either of them, on the one part; and the abbot and convent of the

Monastery of Strataflorida, of the Cistercian order and of the diocese of St. David's, on the other part: For the settlement of the disagreement which has arisen between the same for themselves and their successors it is unanimously agreed after the manner, namely:—

“That the prebendaries, rectors, and vicars of the prebends of the aforesaid churches, and their successors, and the others whosoever are belonging to the collation of the bishop, or whose rectory or vicarage belongs, shall receive in the parishes of each of the same, from all and singular the tenants, present and future, of the said abbot and convent, as well husbandmen portioners as assessed, two parts (out of three) of the tithes of sheaves, of hay, of lambs, of calves, of colts, of piglings, of wool, of flax, of cheese, and of the private tithes commonly called ‘Privethegom’; and also the aforesaid prebendaries, rectors, and vicars, shall receive wholly the rest of the small tithes not expressed above; and the aforesaid abbot and convent of Strataflorida, because they are manifestly oppressed with the burden of poverty, shall receive (or may receive) the third part of the aforesaid specified tithes of their aforesaid tenants for themselves and their successors. But all oblations belonging to the aforesaid churches and prebends, the prebendaries, rectors, and vicars, thereof may receive, just as is known to be in accordance with the common law.

“But if any persons, for the object of devotion, approach the monastery of the said Abbey, or the chapels thereof, namely, of St. Paulinus and St. Madoc, making therein any oblations, the said abbot and convent and their successors may wholly receive the same, and the aforesaid husbandmen and tenants on all days of the year in which others have been accustomed and ought to make offerings in the prebends and churches aforesaid, may be held to make therein the due oblations just as the parishioners of the said places. But the aforesaid prebendaries, rectors, and vicars may be held to administer to the aforesaid husbandmen the sacraments and things appertaining to sacraments; no rectors or vicars whatsoever may presume to demand from those who serve the monastery, dwelling within the precinct of the same, by reason of the lands or property which they possess within the same precincts.

“And if it happen that the said abbot and convent, or their successors, molest, [or] disturb, the said bishop, chapter, rectors, and vicars, or any thereof, in the receiving of the aforesaid tithes just as has been specified above, or in anywise, by themselves or others, contravene this writing, the same abbot and convent laid themselves and their successors, and their afore-

said Monastery, in the sum of ten pounds of lawful money, to be paid to the fabric of the Church of Blessed Mary de Arcubus [*i.e.*, Bow Church], London, in the name of a pure debt, together with the losses and expenses of the bishop, chapters, prebendaries, rectors, and vicars aforesaid, or any one thereof, may have sustained by reason of the unjust detention or spoliation and . . . . . of the aforesaid oblations, as often as they shall have contravened in any wise the premisses or any one of the premisses, the principal compact nevertheless subsisting in its own force, notwithstanding any exception granted to their persons or to the order of the same; any privileges of which exemption, granted, as is aforesaid, to the same religious and their orders (to the end only that all the premisses be firmly observed), the said abbot and convent, for themselves and their successors, expressly renounce by these presents.

“And the aforesaid bishop, chapters, rectors, and vicars, for themselves and their successors, renounces and renounce, for each of them, by these presents, all and singular, the actions and demands which, before the making of these presents, they may have had, or can have had, or any one of them can have had, by reason of the premisses against the said religious.

“And if it happen that the said bishop, chapters, rectors, and vicars, or any thereof, or their successors, in any wise infringe, violate, or contravene the said agreement, they will and grant, and especially bind themselves, that the one who infringes or contravenes the premisses, or any of the premisses, be held and bound in the sum of ten pounds of lawful money, to be paid to the fabric of the Church of Blessed Mary de Arcubus, in the name of a pure debt, together with the losses and expenses which the aforesaid abbot and convent, or their successors, may have sustained by reason of the violation or non-observance of the aforesaid agreement, the principal compact nevertheless enduring in its own force. In witness of all of which, the seal of the aforesaid venerable father Lord Henry, Bishop of St. David’s, together with the common seal of the Chapter of St. David’s, on the one part, and the common seal of the said abbot and convent on the other part, have been appended to this present indenture. Given at Strataflorida, on the twenty-first day of the month of March, in the year of our Lord one thousand three hundred and thirty-nine.”

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DOCUMENTS RELATING TO THE PERIOD OF  
REBELLION OF OWAIN GLENDOWER.

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I am indebted to Mr. R. W. Banks for the following transcripts of the Patent Rolls, 3rd Henry IV, *temp.* 1402. They are an important addition to the scanty list of original documents relating to Strata Florida Abbey:—

*Patent Roll, 3 H. IV* (p. 1, m. 2).

“Whereas the Abbey of Strata Florida by the frequent aggressions of Welsh rebels, and also by raids of the King’s lieges for the castigation of the same rebels, is greatly impoverished, and its lands devastated, so that the dispersion of the Abbot and monks is to be feared, the King has taken the Abbey and its appurtenances, with all annuities, pensions, leases, etc., granted by its Abbots, into his hand, and has committed the custody of the Abbey and its lands, etc., to Thomas de Percy, Earl of Worcester, and John Belyng, Clerk, to dispose thereof to the Abbey’s best advantage, and for its relief; all issues to be devoted to the support of the Abbot and monks, for the succour and relief of the said place; and until this is effected, all annuities, pensions, etc., are to cease; none of its corn, cattle, etc., to be taken by purveyors for the household of the King or of the Prince of Wales.

“Dated Westminster, 1 April A.D. 1402. By the Council.”

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*Pat. Roll, 3 H. IV* (p. 2, m. 1).

“Appointment of Richard Lord de Grey, the King’s kinsman, as the King’s Lieutenant in the parts and lordships of Breken, Aberustwyth, Cardygan, Kermerdyn, Buelt, and Hay, for the safe government of the marches of South Wales and parts adjacent, and for resisting the malice of the King’s Welsh rebels. He is also appointed to the safe custody of the castles of the places above named. He is to pursue and overcome the rebels, with power to receive into the King’s favour those who surrender their arms and find surety to give up the captains and leaders of all who procured them to rebel, etc.

“Dated at Westminster, 26 September 1402.”

“Appointment of John Merbury and John ap Henry to muster 120 men and 600 archers, who are to serve in the company of Richard Lord de Grey for the custody of the castles above mentioned.”

Same date.

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*Issue Roll (Rolls), 9 H. IV, Michaelmas, 16 November (1407).*

“To Henry Prince of Wales.

“In monies by him received by the hands of John Straunge, his Treasurer, for the war, of the aforesaid Treasurer at Gloucester, for the pay of 120 men-at-arms, each to take per day 12*d.*, and 360 archers at 6*d.* per day each, for a quarter of a year, to stay in the Abbey of Strata Florida, and guard and defend it from the malice of the rebels, those who have submitted to the King, and to ride after and make war with the rebels, as well in South Wales as in North Wales, during the aforesaid time.

“By writ of the Privy Seal. Dated of this term. £666 13*s.* 4*d.*, for which he will account.”

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*Minutes of the Council held at the Friars Preachers in London*  
Feb. 2 H. v, 1415.

(From *Brit. Mus. Cott., Cleop. F. iii.*)

“Pur la garde de parties de Gales.

“Item pur la sauve garde des parties de Gales durant le susdit viage sil plect au Roy. Soient illoques ordenez e hommes darmes et ce archers dont serront en Northgales lx hommes darmes et exx archers. Et en Suthgales xl hommes darmes et III<sup>xx</sup> archers lesqueux xl hommes darmes et III<sup>xx</sup> archers serront a Stratfleure.”

[Translation.]

“For the ward of the parts of Wales.

“Item for the safe ward of the parts of Wales during the aforesaid expedition if it pleases the king. That 100 men at arms and 200 archers may be placed there, of which there shall be in North Wales 60 men at arms and 120 archers. And in South Wales 40 men at arms and 80 archers, the which 40 men at arms and 80 archers shall be at Strata Florida.”

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## CHARTER HENRY VI.

*“ Grant and Confirmation to the Monastery of Strata Florida  
co. Cardigan. 8th of July, 3rd of Henry VI, A.D. 1426.*

[Translation.]

“ THE KING.

“ To all to whom, &c., greeting. We have seen the letters patent of the Lord Richard, late King of England, after the Conquest the second, of the twentieth day of October, in the fourth year of his reign, of confirmation, made in these words, Richard, by the grace of God, King of England and France, and Lord of Ireland, to all to whom the present letters shall come, greeting ; We have seen the letters patent of our most dear Lord and Father, the Lord Edward, late Prince of Aquitaine and Wales, in these words, Edward, eldest son of the illustrious King of England and France, Prince of Aquitaine and Wales, Duke of Cornwall and Earl of Chester, to all to whom the present letters shall come, greeting ; We have seen the charter of confirmation of our said Lord the King and Father, in these words, Edward, by the grace of God, King of England, Lord of Ireland and Duke of Aquitaine, to the Archbishops, Bishops, Abbots, Priors, Earls, Barons, Justices, Sheriffs, Reeves, Ministers, and all his Bailiffs and faithful Men, greeting ; We have seen the charter of confirmation of the Lord Edward, of famous memory, late King of England, our father, in these words, Edward, by the grace of God, King of England, Lord of Ireland and Duke of Aquitaine, to all to whom the present letters shall come, greeting ; We have seen the letters patent, which the Lord Edward, of famous memory, formerly King of England, our father, made to the Abbot and Convent of Strat Fleur, in Wales, in these words, Edward, by the grace of God, King of England, Lord of Ireland, and Duke of Aquitaine, to all to whom the present letters shall come, greeting ; We have seen the charter of Rese, formerly Prince of Wales, and of Griffin Rese, and Meredith, made to the Abbot and Convent of Strat Fleur, in these words, To all the sons of Holy Mother Church, present and to come, Rese, Prince of Wales, greeting and peace : Let it be known to you all, that I, Rese, Proprietary-Prince of South Wales, began to build the venerable monastery called Strat Fleur, and have loved and cherished it when built, increased its property and possessions as much as I have been able (the Lord approving), bestowed on it ample land in plain and tillage, and hill for the pasture of animals, with a devout mind, for the remedy of the souls of myself, my predecessors, and successors,

as much as was fitting ; and all which donations that I have before given to the same monastery, in the year, from the incarnation of our Lord one thousand one hundred and eighty-four, by the memory of the present writing, I have again confirmed : Also, my three sons, (to wit) Griffin, Rese, and Meredud, the same donation at the same time and place, gave into the hands of the Abbot of Strat Fleur, finally resolving, before many of the army, in the church of St. Bridget at Rhayader, with me, that whatsoever possessions and whatsoever goods the same monastery, by virtue of these presents, possesses and keeps, or which, by the grants of Pontiffs, the bounty of Princes, the oblation of faithful men, or other just methods, it shall, by the favour of God, obtain, they shall remain firm, free, and untouched, to the same Monks and their successors, from all secular and ecclesiastical custom and dues, wherein we have caused these things to be expressed in proper words—Nannerth, in its bounds ; that is, Nant hi Wleidast ha Harwy, Gwy hit yn Hedernaul, Herdernaul ; from thence hit Blain ; from thence across unto blain Ystinth, Ystinth in hit unto Tanalogen, Gwaylant Tanalogen hit hi blayn ; from thence directly across unto Marchnant, Marchnant unto . . . . . Meuric unto Teywy, Teywy hit Camdur Veghan, Camdur Veghan in hit hit blain ; from thence as it leads Pant Gwenn hit hi Camdur Vawr ; afterwards by Camdur across hi ar Hirweyn Cadathen unto Airon, as it leads unto the ditch which is between Tref Coll and Brumrit ditch hit hi blain, O vlain hi ditch directly hi bennant hi Gelly hir ; from thence directly hit ar huiant between Vuarth Carann and Dinas Driewyr ; from thence as the same river leads unto the Grange, which is called Castel hi Flemys ; from the Grange afterwards on the other side of the river, across the hill, as it leads Nant Guenn hit hi nant between Mais Glas and Trebrith hi nant hit ar Deyvy, Tewy hit hy Mais tref linn, Mais tref linn directly hit in blain-buden, hubuden hit hi Llinn nant Llinn directly across unto Llanerth hi Gnuith wa, O Llannerth hi Gnuith wa, directly across the mountain hi ar Gelly Hagharat ; the same mountain is afterwards the bound ; directly across unto Blain Camdur, Camdur as it leads unto Tiwy ; Tiwy, from thence upwards on both sides, hit hi blayn directly afterwards o vlain Tewy hit hi blain Arban, Arban in hit unto Claerwen unto Glan Elan ; from thence unto Groen Gwynnion hi groen directly upwards hi Talluchuit hi ceweir hir Escuir, ar hit unto blain Riscant, o vlain Riscant across the mountain unto Llam hir Huber, where the bounds of the before-named land, which is called Nannerth, are intermixed likewise with these bounds which we have taken ; but also whatsoever is contained within the bounds before written by the circuit, in field and wood, in waters and meadows, in feedings, in cultivated and uncultivated, I Rese, and my before-named sons, and all my pos-



terity, to the aforesaid Monks of Strat Fleur, and their successors, in perpetual right, do warrant. And these are the names of the more excellent places in the same bounds—Moill gedian, Nann Sylmer, Nann Eyrin, Nann Morant, Wriðm Abcoill, Abmethn Stratonmurn, Kelly Camcoid, Priskenn Emnann, Stratflur, Rit Vendigait, Dol vawr, Llinngot, Tref hi Gwydel, Finnaun oyer Kellus Brinev deny Escen pireth, Castel Flemys, Mais Glas. And of the donation of the sons of Cadugan, and of their heirs, and of our Lordship Cewyn hi ryt Esceir Seison, and a half part of Branwennion, except Esceir hi tu ar Arth, where the sons of Seilsanc have founded their buildings, Tref both, with their appendages. And these are the bounds of the same, described by Rese, with his nobility, and also Griffin his son—O Abermeilor upwards ar hit arth unto the ditch which flows from the fountain Bleydud, or Fannaun hu pant in hit unto the ditch Byleyneyt, hi ditch ar hit unto Pannt Guenn, between Marchdi, and Brinn Llendu hi pant ar hit unto the ditch, which is the bound between Marchdi and the town which is called Aidiscuikyweth, which Gwenlleant gave to the aforesaid Monks in perpetual alms, with the advice of us and of our sons. And the ditches aforesaid in the bound is unto the sea, and the sea unto the mouth of the Arth, Arth hit in Abermeilor, and on the shore and in the sea, from the mouth of the Arth unto the mouth Airon Coreden; and all the fishing to the aforesaid monastery we give for ever, and also of my own fishery one day and one night in every week. And of all this donation, these are witnesses, the two sons Llandent, Gruffry, and Rees Jorueth son of Edeyrnweyn, Ediorwerth son of Kedynor, two sons of Llewelyn, Gingeunen and Cadogan Mereduth son of Rederuth, and Gugan Stacta Gruffuth son of Bledunt, O Vabudred, and Mereduth son of Enniann, son of Bledunt O Werthymnyann. Also we have seen a charter of Henry, formerly King of England, made to the aforesaid Abbot and Monks of Stratflur, in these words, Henry, by the grace of God, King of England and Duke of Normandy and Aquitain, and Earl of Anjou, to the Archbishops, Bishops, Abbots, Earls, Barons, Justices, Sheriffs, and all his Ministers and faithful Men of all England and Wales, greeting: Know ye that I have granted, and by this my present charter confirmed, to the Abbot of Stratflur, and the Monks there serving God, the reasonable donation, which Rese son of Griffin made to them, of the lands underwritten, (to wit)—from the field which is between Hendrev Kynandu and the stream of Buar Thegre, and from thence unto Teywi, and Hirgarth unto Flur and unto Toyvir, and from Llanereth unto Hendogen, with their bounds, and from the rivulet which is called Pistrith, from Kelly Agarar unto Toyvy, and from Lispennard, and from Strat Fleur with their bounds, and from Kennen

Castle with their bounds, and from Kellyen Anan and from Mais Glas, with their bounds, and from Pennal unto Airondy and unto Candor, and from Kevenperveth, with their bounds, and from Kylllyen Vrindenoy and from Maies-bre, with their bounds, and from Fennaunn oyer by Rythuelyn upwards unto Maies-bre, and from Dresboith and Rywarth unto the sea : wherefore I will and firmly command that the aforesaid Monks shall have and hold all the things underwritten well and in peace, freely and quietly, fully, entirely, and honourably, in wood and plain, in meadows and pastures, in waters and mills, in ways and paths, and in all other places and things, and with all their liberties and free customs, as the charter of the aforesaid Rese witnesseth. Witness, Richard Bishop of Winchester, Geoffry Bishop of Ely, and Sefrey Bishop of Chichester, and Peter Bishop of St. David's, Geoffrey Chancellor, my son, Master Walter de Const Archdeacon of Exeter, Ralph de Caumville, Hugh de Morweth, William de Briossa the younger, at Winchester. Also, know ye that I have likewise seen the confirmation which John, formerly King of England, made to the aforesaid Abbot and convent of Strat Fleur, in these words, John, by the grace of God, King of England, Lord of Ireland, Duke of Normandy and Aquitain, Earl of Anjou, to the Archbishops, Bishops, Abbots, Earls, Barons, Justices, Sheriffs, Ministers, and all his Bailiffs and faithful Men, greeting; Know ye that we have granted, and by our present charter confirmed, to God and the blessed Virgin Mary, and to the Abbot of Strat Fleur, and to the Cistercian Monks there serving God, all the reasonable gifts which have been given to them as well in ecclesiastical as secular possessions, as the charters of the donors which they have, thereof reasonably witness, moreover, in the commote of Cardigan, that which Mailgon son of Rese demised to us : wherefore we will and firmly command that the aforesaid Abbot and Monks have and hold all their reasonable gifts well and in peace, as is above written. These being witnesses, William Mareschal Earl of Pembroke, Geoffrey Fitz-Peter Earl of Essex, William Earl of Salisbury, William Briwer, Hugh Bard. Given by the hand of Henry<sup>1</sup> Archbishop of Canterbury, our Chancellor, at Worcester, the eleventh day of April, in the first year of our reign. And we, the donations and grants aforesaid holding firm and valid the same for us and our heirs, as much as in us lies, do grant and

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<sup>1</sup> " No Archbishop of Canterbury of the name of Henry occupied the See of Canterbury before Henry Chichele, A.D. 1414-1443. The MS. must have intended to denote Hubert Walter Archbishop of Canterbury, A.D. 1193-1205."

confirm, as the charters aforesaid reasonably witness ; in testimony whereof, we have caused these our letters to be made patent. Witness, ourself at Westminster, the twenty-seventh day of May, in the thirteenth year of our reign. Also, we have seen a charter which Mailgon, the son of Rese formerly Prince of South Wales, made to God and the blessed Mary, and the Monks of Strat Fleur there serving God, in these words, To all the sons of Holy Mother Church, present and to come, who shall see this charter, Mailgon, son of Rese Prince of South Wales, greeting ; Be it known to you all, that we, for the safety of our soul and the souls of our father and mother, and ancestors and successors, and of all our friends and predecessors, for the prosperity of the present life, and likewise in remuneration of future reward, have granted, and by this our present charter confirmed, to God and the blessed Mary, and the Monks of Strat Flur, as well present as to come, serving God there for ever, all the donations which the good Prince Rese my father of pious memory, the noble founder of the same monastery, gave to the aforesaid place and the Monks abovesaid, in lands and meadows, in pastures, in waters and moors, in wood and plain, in sea and rivers, in fisheries and fishings, as well of the sea as of rivers, in all liberties and customs, goods, possessions, as well moveable as immoveable, far and near, in ports and streets, in towns and castles, above and under the land, and in all other things which they now have and possess, or which they may hereafter have, by the favour of God, by the bounty of Princes, or the donations of any faithful men, or by any other just methods, that they may have and possess the same well and in peace, freely and quietly, peaceably and honourably, without any service and secular exaction, entirely without any diminution, in pure and perpetual alms, as well those things had as those to be had from henceforth, by just methods and titles, at what time soever acquired, wherein we make known these in proper words—Nannerth, with its bounds ; that is, Nant hi Bleidast hit ar wy, Gwy hit en Herdernawl hit hi blain ; from thence across unto Blayn Estoyth, Estoythen hit unto Tanalogen Gwalant Tanalogen hit hi blayn ; from thence directly across unto Marchnant, Marchnant unto Meuric, Meuric unto Teyvy, Teyvy hit Camdur Baghan, Camdur Baghan in hi hit y blain ; from thence as it leads Pant Guin en hi hit en Camdur Vaur ; afterwards by Camdur, across hit ar Hirwen Cadaithny unto Airon, Ayrion as it leads unto the ditch which is between Tref Collh and Brynbis ditch hit hi blayn ; O hi blain hit ditch directly hit en phennant he gelly hir ; from thence directly hit ar nant between Buarth Carann and Dynass Driewyr ; from thence as the same river leads

unto the Grange which is called Castel Flemys; from the Grange afterwards on the other side of the river across the hill, as it leads Pant Guin, Hirthe nant between Mays Glas and Trefbrith hy denant au hit hit ar Teyvy, Teyvy yn hi hit hit mais Trefflinn, mais Trefflinn directly hut hyn Lyn Bathen, Lyn Lyn Bathen hut en nant, Lin nanhillin directly across unto Llannarth Cundena; O Llannarth Cundena across the mountain hit ar gelly Agarat; the same mountain afterwards is the bound directly across unto blain Camdor, Camdor as it leads unto Tewy; Tewy, from thence upwards on both sides hit hi blayn; directly afterwards O vlain Tewy hit en blayn Arban, Arban en hi hit unto Clarwen, Clarwen unto Elan, Elan from thence unto Groen Gwynnion y groev, directly upwards hi Tal Luchwit; O Tal Luchwit hit Kenyn yr Escair; ar Escair ar hi hit unto blayn Riscant; O blayn Riscant across the mountain unto lain er Vabon, where the bounds of the beforenamed land, which is called Nannarth, are intermixed likewise with these bounds which we have taken. But whatsoever is contained within the bounds before written, by the circuit in field and wood, in waters and meadows, and feedings in cultivated and uncultivated, I Mailgon, do confirm and grant to the aforesaid Monks to have for ever. And these are the names of the more excellent places in the same bounds—Moill Gedian, Nant Elmer, Nant Eyrin, Nant Morant, Brithen, Abcoil, Abmethn, S<sup>t</sup> Gemmurn, Gelly Cam Choit, Prishen Eynann, Stratflur, Rit Vendigait, Dol Vaur, Lloyn y got, Tref Egwydel Fennann, Kellen Brim Deyvy, Esceir p'ueth, Chastel Flemmys, Maes glas; and of the gift of the sons of Cadugan and their heirs, and of our Lordship, Chenen hi ret Esceir Saisson, and the half part of Branwennen, except Esceir hi tu ayt Arth, where the sons of Seissant have founded their buildings, Tref both, with their appendages; and these are the bounds of the same, which Rese my father described, with his nobles—O Abermeiller upwards ar hi hit arth unto the ditch which flows from the mountain Bleidud, O Fennann hir pant, pant em hit unto the ditch Bilemed ef ditch ar hi hit unto pant Gwenn, between Marchdi and Brin Houlde he pant ar hi hit unto the ditch which is the bound between Marchdi and the town which is called Ardescinkyweth, which my father Rese of pious memory gave to the aforesaid Monks, by the advice of his wife and sons, my brothers; and the ditch aforesaid is the bound unto the sea, and the sea unto the mouth of Arth, Arth hit en Abermeiller, and in the shore, and in the sea, from the mouth of Arth unto the mouth of Airon, the fisheries and all fishings, to the aforesaid Monastery we give for ever; and also of my own fishery and fishing, one day and one night in every week. Also, I confirm to the aforesaid Monks of

Stratflur the fisheries of Penwedie, as my father and my brother Griffin gave to them, that no other Monks may think they have right there. These being witnesses, Rese the son of Griffin, who hath also strengthened this confirmation by his donation, and Rese the son of Gervase, Rese the son Byderch, Gruffry and Griffin sons of Cadugan, Kenkenerith, Gruffin ap Llanden, Jorwerth son of Kedmor, Adam Pammo, Urien son of Kedmor, Rese son of Llanden ; of the religious, Philip Abbot of Strata Marcella, David Abbot of Llhalet, Tait Scissil, Tait Ithell, Aman Sub-prior, Philip the Monk, Godfrey de Morgan. Given the eleventh kalends of February, at the house of Strat Fleur, in the year one thousand one hundred and ninety-eight from the incarnation of the Lord. Also, we have seen a charter which Rese son of Rese made to God and the blessed Mary, and the Monks aforesaid, in these words, To all the sons of Holy Mother Church who shall see the present charter, Rese son of Rese, greeting. We make it known to you all that we have given and granted, and by this my present charter confirmed, for the safety of the soul of myself, and my father and mother, and my ancestors and successors, to God and the blessed Mary, and the Monks of Stratfleur, in pure and perpetual alms, free and quit from all service and exaction, as well secular as ecclesiastical, these lands, with their bounds and appurtenances, as are more fully bounded and described in the charters of Mailgon my brother, who first gave them (to wit)—Marchdi Maur and Marchdi Bichan by their bounds, Penevet Rossan, and Escheir Maentenill ar hi hit and rywannon, with their limits and bounds, and Blayn pistell with their bounds, and Kellygwenyn with their bounds and appurtenances. I Rese gave these lands to the aforesaid Monks for ever, in wood and plain, in meadows and pastures, in waters and moors, in fisheries and fishings, on or beneath the land, in all liberties and customs, by all things and in all things, as the charter of Mailgon my brother witnesses and describes ; and moreover, I have given to the holy monastery of Stratfleur my body at last, to be buried wheresoever and by whatsoever death it shall happen to fall. And also all the donations which my father of pious memory gave to the same monastery, I have altogether granted, as amongst other things my charter more fully contains. I have made this donation to the monastery and Monks of Strat Fleur, in the year from the incarnation of the Lord, one thousand one hundred and ninety-eight, the nineteenth kalends of January, in the chapter house before the convent. Witnesses, Aman Sub-prior, Ithell and Elider, Monks, and of the secular witnesses Owyn Barath, son of Howell Elider son of Owin Gwyon Seys, and Maeredud his brother, Cadugan

son of Owin Vat, Gref Jer'n Wynen, and many others. We have inspected a charter of Rese son of Gruffin, son of Rese the Great, which he made to God and the blessed Mary, and to the aforesaid Monks in these words. To all the sons of Holy Mother Church, who shall see this charter, Rese son of Griffin, son of Rese the Great, greeting. I make it known to you'all that I have given and granted to the Monks of Stratfleur serving God and the blessed Mary there, for the remedy of my soul and of the souls of my parents, in pure and perpetual alms, all the donations which my father Griffin of pious memory, and my grandfather Rese and all his sons gave, as their charters witness; and the names of the principal places are these—Rid Vendiget in all its bounds and appurtenances, Finann oyr in all its bounds and appurtenances, Castel Flemys in all its bounds and appurtenances, Rywannon, Finan Mebwyn, in all its bounds and appurtenances, as in the charters of Mailgon is contained, Coyt Maur in the bounds which the charter of Rese the younger, son of Rese the Great, bounds, Morva and Dien Marchdi, and from Marchdi unto Caledan and Ardithyn Kenet, Kenen Gwarthanarth Gorthwynt Branwenen; these places in all the appurtenances and bounds which the charters that the same Monks have, witness—Morva Biehan in the bounds which the charter of Mailgon bounds; Treffinaes in all its bounds, Sanau Sky in the bounds which Gruffin, son of Cadugan, gave in perpetual alms to the aforesaid Monks, Y Tywarthen, Lan Vessil, Argoyt y Gwenneb Bancharum; these places in all their bounds and appurtenances, Taffloget pull peirant bottoll in all the bounds which the charters of the aforesaid Monks of the same places shew, Treff Bryn in the bounds which the charter of Mailgon bounds, Stratfyn, Y groen guenynoun in all the bounds which the charter of Gruffin, my father, shews, Kenenely in all its bounds and appurtenances, Aberdehonwy in all its bounds and appurtenances, Abcoel Lanmadauc in all its bounds and appurtenances, Nant Morant, and Nanheirth Cuingoybedauc in all its bounds. Moreover all the pasture of Cantrefmaur, and Cantrefbaghan, and of the four Cantreds of Cardigan, and especially of Penwedie, in the same manner and the same bounds which the charter of Mailgon bounds, given to the aforesaid Monks of the pasture Penwedoc; also the whole land which is between Tywy and Yrion o blain Tywy hit y Ditorna in yar blain pull ywarth unto Blayn Trosnant, in Trosnant unto Tywy, from thence as Tywy leads unto Camdor, from Camdor hit y Blayn; also the whole land which is called Elenmyth, as the charters of the aforesaid Monks of the same land witness; the pasture also of Comot Deudor, as in the charters of the same Monks is more

fully contained. All the lands, and all the pastures beforenamed, or also whatsoever other lands or pastures whatsoever, in and upon the land, in rivers, in the sea, and wheresoever the aforesaid Monks by the grant of Pontiffs, the bounty of Princes, the oblation of faithful men, or by whatsoever other just methods, by the favour of God, have obtained, I give and grant to the same Monks in all liberties and good customs. And this donation, with the first seal which I had, I have confirmed, and before this charter I have given none other to any man, nor had I any seal before this with which I have confirmed this charter. And this donation is made in the year from the incarnation of our Lord, 1202. These being witnesses, Maud my mother, Rese son of Reder, Henr. Bican, Adam my clerk, Abraham the Monk, Brother Bledyn, Brother Iorn, Brother William, Brother Dristan, Brother Ivor Perenbas. We have also seen the charter which Mailgon the younger, son of Mailgon, son of Rese, Prince of South Wales, made to God and the blessed Mary and the aforesaid Monks, in these words. To all the sons of Holy Church, as well present as to come, who shall inspect this charter, Mailgon the younger, son of Mailgon, son of Rese, Prince of South Wales, greeting in the Lord; I will that it come to the knowledge of you all, that for the safety of my soul and of the souls of my father and mother, and of my wife, and my ancestors and successors, I have given and granted, and by my present charter confirmed, to God and the blessed Mary, and the Monks of Stratflur, for me and my heirs, in pure and perpetual alms, all the donations, grants, and liberties, which my father of venerable memory, Mailgon, the son of Rese, gave to the same Monks, in lands and pastures and meadows, in waters and moors, in wood and plain, in the sea and rivers, in fisheries and fishings as well of the sea and seaports as of rivers, in all liberties and customs, goods and possessions, as well moveable as immoveable, upon land and under land, and in all other things and possessions which the same Monks now hold and possess, by the bounty of Princes or the donation of any of the faithful, or by any other just means whatsoever, free from all service and exaction as well ecclesiastical as secular, quit from all molestation or grievance for ever, as the charters of the Lord Mailgon, my father, and other donors, in more ample and extensive terms declare; the principal places of which are these (to wit) Stratflur, in which place the monastery is situate, with its bounds and appurtenances, Ryt Vendigitt, Henwanathlot,<sup>1</sup> Bryn hop, Keven Chastell, Luen y goc, and Dol vaur, Tref y Gwydel, as the river which is called

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<sup>1</sup> Hén Monachlog. See *Arch. Camb.*, vol. iii, p. 112.

Marchnant flows into another river called Meurer, duy Taflogen, with their bounds and appurtenances, Palpeirant with its bounds and appurtenances, yr Esceir perneth, Esceir y Pernygnant bot coll Herngt Lywarth between Rytnant and Meryn Kilmedur, Kef Ryn, Fynnann oyr, Bryn cherlyth, Kellyev Vycheyn, Kelhev Bryn Doyvy, Castell Flemmys, Maes glas Treflyn, dynas Drihwyr unto Ayron, tref y Coll with their bounds and appurtenances, Bryn y rith, Escheir Saissan, Buarth Carann, riw an hym, Kelhiev Rumbyn, Escheir Mayntenyll, Pencoeed Rossan, Kelly ar Gweynyn, Kelhiev Egarat, Buarth Elharth, according to the bounds which are contained in the charters of the Monks, Fynnann Mebwyn with the bounds which the Monks have in their charters, Yr Havot wen, Talpont gloyned, Hen Vorgon, Tref y beny, Mendyn Castell Dynanvel, Tref y Gendu, Y Morva, Y Drefboyth, Y Rander o nant y fyn unto the well Bleydud, Airdifkyn, Kenet Bryn, Llanden, Marchdi Vighan, Keuen Gwarthanarth, Cair treu hir, Marchdi maur, Morva manhelheth, blayn sait Tranwenhen, Kyman-wynet, Gurthwynt with their bounds and appurtenances, Dyneird and Dref Ladhen with their bounds and appurtenances, Y Morva Vichan, Tref mais sanyn yky, Tywarthen Penwedie, Kan earn dhan Vessill Argoid y Gum weyn, Talpont cucull, Castell Gughan, Castellan, as the charters of the Monks contain; Yr hen Chau nant Girint with Gwybedaue Namerd Ewy ab Edarvaull hit y blain, and treamlquyn, and the whole land of Elenyth, as the charters of all the donors declare, Y Briden' Ryn avanawl ab corll, Y groen gwynnion, Llanvadaue with their bounds and appurtenances, Ystratfyn with its bounds and appurtenances, Nantbey, groen gwynnyon, and the whole pasture of Cardigan, except the portions which belong to the Monks of Whitehouse, and of Cumhyr, as in the cyrographs [?] are contained. Therefore all the before named lands and pastures, with all their bounds and appurtenances, in fields and woods, in meadows and waters, in moors and feedings, in cultivated and uncultivated, and all other the donations, grants, and liberties before named; moreover the liberty of buying and selling, and of exercising all their businesses, in all my lands and demesne, and liberty and acquittance of all toll, and passage, and pontage, and of all other customs and exactions to me belonging, either upon land or in the sea, or seaports, and in towns and castles, or in all other places of my lordship, to the same Monks I do give, grant, and by my present charter confirm, all contradiction and appeal being removed for ever. And because I will that this my donation and confirmation may remain firm and unshaken for ever, I have strengthened the present writing with the impression of



my seal. These being witnesses, the Lord Mailgon son of Rese, Morgan son of Rese, M. Archdeacon of Cardigan, David then Prior of Stratflur, Ithell Monk of Diermuth, the convent of the same place, and many others. And we the donations, grants, and confirmations aforesaid holding firm and valid, the same for us and our heirs, as much as in us lies, to our beloved in Christ the Abbot and convent of the said place of Stratflur and their successors, grant, and confirm as the letters and charters above-said reasonably testify, and as the same Abbot and convent of Stratflur and their predecessors, the lands and tenements aforesaid, with the appurtenances, have hitherto held, and the liberties and acquittances aforesaid, have reasonably used and enjoyed. In testimony whereof we have caused these our letters to be made patent. Witness ourself at Westminster the 10th day of November, in the fourteenth year of our reign.<sup>1</sup> And we the donations, grants, and confirmations aforesaid holding firm and valid, the same for us and our heirs, as much as in us lies, to our beloved in Christ, Meredith, the now Abbot, and the convent of the said place and their successors for ever, do grant and confirm, as the charters and letters aforesaid reasonably testify. Moreover willing to do further grace in this behalf to the aforesaid Abbot and convent, we have granted for us and our heirs, and by this charter confirmed to the same Abbot and convent, that although they or their predecessors the liberties, acquittances, in the aforesaid charters and letters contained, or in either of them, in any case arising, have not hitherto used, nevertheless the same Abbot and convent, and their successors, all the liberties and acquittances aforesaid, and every of them, may hereafter fully enjoy and use without the hindrance or impediment of us or our heirs, or of the Justices, Escheators, Sheriffs, or other Bailiffs or Ministers whomsoever, for ever. Moreover, whereas the same Abbot and convent, and their men and tenants in the county of Cardigan, who, in pleas and other complaints against them moved of those things which arise in the same county, ought to answer at Lampadarn in the same county, are now forced to answer at Carmarthen and divers other places out of the county aforesaid, by our Justice of South Wales and other our Ministers there, in such pleas and complaints within the same county so arising, and on that occasion are unduly vexed with expenses and divers labours, whereby many alms and the celebration of masses, which for us and our progenitors and heirs ought there to be made, are frequently (as we are informed) subtracted; they have therefore besought us that we would be careful to

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<sup>1</sup> A.D. 1229.

provide for their indemnity in this behalf. We willing graciously to provide for their security and quiet, and that the said Monks may, with greater tranquility, be able to attend such divine services, and more wholesomely sustain the said alms in this behalf, have granted for us and our heirs, and by this our charter confirmed, to the aforesaid Abbot and convent, that they and their successors, and their men and tenants at Lampadarn, within the said county of Cardigan, where the sessions of our Justice of South Wales and of our court for those things which there arise, are held in such pleas and complaints and other causes against them moved, and within the said county of Cardigan, arising before the aforesaid Justice for the time being, and other our Ministers there, and not elsewhere, may answer according to the laws and customs of those parts; and that the same Abbot and convent, or their successors, or their men and tenants aforesaid, of those things which within the said county shall so arise, shall not be forced, nor in any wise compelled, nor in any manner howsoever bound to answer out of the said county of Cardigan, except of such pleas and complaints as touch us or our heirs, or in any case in which any of such pleas and complaints before the Justice of South Wales, or other the Ministers of us or our heirs, may not be pleaded and determined according to the laws and customs abovesaid; saving always to us and our heirs the fines, ransoms, and amerciaments, and other profits of the aforesaid Abbot and convent and their successors, and of their tenants, which to us and our heirs, by reason of such pleas and complaints, of right pertain, and ought to pertain; these being witnesses, the venerable Fathers, J. Archbishop of Canterbury, Primate of all England, our Chancellor, H. Bishop of Lincoln, our Treasurer, R. Bishop of Coventry and Lichfield, Richard, Earl of Arundel, Ralph Basset of Drayton, Henry de Ferrars, Robert de Uffow, Steward of our Household, and others. Given by our hand at Leycester, the second day of October, in the tenth year of our reign.<sup>1</sup> We have also seen the charter of Kavan, son of Meredith, son of Owen, made to God and the blessed Mary and the Monks abovesaid, in these words. To all the sons of Holy Church, present and to come, Cavan, the son of Meredith, son of Owen, greeting and peace. I make known to you all that I have given and granted, and by this my present charter confirmed, for me and my heirs and successors whomsoever, to God and the blessed Mary and the Monks of Stratflur, for the relief of my soul and the souls of my ancestors and successors, in pure, free, and perpetual alms, all the lands and

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<sup>1</sup> A.D. 1336.

tenements, donations, legacies, sales, grants, feedings, pastures, and liberties, which my ancestor of pious memory, the Lord Rese the Great, Prince of South Wales, and all his sons and grandsons, and which the Lord Mered. of good memory, the son of Owen, my father, and all other my ancestors, also Owen and Griffin, my brothers, and other the faithful, either by gift or purchase, or by any other just means, have given and conferred in, upon, or under the land, in pastures and meadows, in waters and moors, in wood and plain, in land cultivated and uncultivated, in fisheries and fishings as well of the sea and seaports as of rivers, in all liberties and good customs, and possessions as well moveable as immoveable, hitherto had or now to be had, entirely, freely, and quietly, from all service and exaction, ecclesiastical and secular, and from any suit whatsoever, as they have been, and more fully heretofore possessed, in more ample and more extensive terms and bounds, or hereafter shall possess, certain places and bounds whereof we do point out and name by their proper names, (that is to say,) Stratflur, in which place the monastery is situate, with all its bounds and appurtenances, Redvendingheyt, Henvynatloc, with its appurtenances, Bryn hop, Keven Castell, Lloen y goc, Dol vaur, Tref y goydhell, Kihnedbrive, Tref unwc, Strat Meurer, except the acres of the Lepers, of which they have special charters, Dwc tafloggeb, Pwll Perran, Bot Coll, in all their bounds and appurtenances, Tref vaes yelafdy, Fennaun oyer in all their bounds, Kellyev Esgeyr Pernerth, Ynys Vorgan, Castell Flemys, Mays glas, Dynas Driewyr unto Ayron, Treflyn tref Ecott, Trefigoidhel, blain Airon, Esgeir Saïsson, in all their bounds and appurtenances, Riwc Anhiri, Kelly Arionvrive bryn Perueth Eskeir vayn tenyll Pencoet, Rossan Kelliev, gwonyn Kelliev Y garad Buerth Elath, except the part of the Nunns of Fennann Vebwynn, Havotwen, Castell, Dynavel, Tref wywedu, Tref y bemyth hen, Voror Mendyn with all their appurtenances, Morva maur, dev Marchdi, and from thence unto Kaledan Ardifkyn, Kyveth Keven guarth avarth, blain Satth, bryn Llanden, with all their bounds and appurtenances, the half part of Browennen, Keman Vynnyd, Gurthwynt with all their appurtenances, Dynernth and Trefflathen with all their bounds and appurtenances, Morva Bichan with all its bounds, Alwen in its bounds, Guergland ballt, dro Ecappell with its appurtenances, Pant Kendelo with all its bounds and appurtenances in the land, and in the sea and sea shores, Treffnaes with all its appurtenances, Sauen Eky in all the bounds which Griffin, the son of Cadugan, gave to the same Monks, Tywarthen Penwedhit Bancarv Llanvessih, Argoit Egvynyn, Talpont Cucull, Castell Gughan, Castellan, with all their

bounds and appurtenances, as the charters of the Monks contain ; at Abelaragh four acres and a meadow, also eight acres and a meadow in the land which is called Llethwedllydyden, with all the other acres which the same monks have at Keven ywanurrech Driffryn Elan with all their bounds, Nant Morant, Nant Elmer, Nant Eyrin, Cumgoybedane, Dyffryn Edervawl Treavil gwyn goletyr, Maen Nannerth goy, with all their bounds and appurtenances, Abercoill, Brithen bz we, Avanaul Llanvadauc, Cullyn, Talluchynt, with all their bounds and appurtenances, Ab' de Hony with all its appurtenances and tenements, Kevenoly with all its bounds and appurtenances, as in the charters of the Monks is more fully contained ; also all the land and pasture of Elenyth, in all its bounds and appurtenances ; also all the land of Nantvey and Treflath Pullburwe with all their bounds and appurtenances ; and that all scruple or ambiguity in every part of the said donations and liberties, which to the said religious men I have given and granted, may hereafter be altogether taken away and removed, especially all and singular the goods which by shipwreck or tempest of the sea, the destruction of any ship or vessel whatsoever, or by wreck or in any other manner or case whatsoever, to any lands whatsoever of the said Monks shall come, or by any misfortune fall, and chiefly in all the maritime lands of the same Monks of Morva Maur (to wit) from Aber Caledan unto Aber Arth, and in all the lands of Morva Bichan, which are held and extended near the sea ; also in the lands of Allwen Ewyr glandhallt in their bounds and appurtenances on both sides Ystoyth, and in the acre called Erowe Ecapell, and in their maritime bounds ; likewise in the land of the Monks called Pont Kendelo in all its bounds and appurtenances ; also all and whatsoever things and goods in the cases above expressed, which upon the lands of the said Monks, or the shores or banks of the same, on in the sea opposite the lands and bounds of the same Monks, in, near, or afar off, shall be thrown, and found or taken, I have, for me and my heirs and successors whomsoever, given and granted (all contradiction removed) quietly, peaceably, and wholly to the aforesaid Monks of Stratflur for ever ; and especially whatsoever shall be thrown or found in all the lands and bounds of the Monks, as well in the sea and sea-shore as out of the sea (to wit)—in ships, skiffs, and tuns, and other vessels whatsoever ; in wine, honey, and beer, and other liquor whatsoever ; likewise in wheat and in all kinds of corn ; in fish, flesh, and all other victuals whatsoever ; in money, of gold or silver, or other money whatsoever : in precious stones, rings, and jewels whatsoever ; in

garments and cloths of whatsoever colour ; in skins, hides, and cattle ; in salt and iron, and other metal whatsoever ; and moreover in all other things, goods, and commodities whatsoever ; any secular custom and demand, exaction, or contradiction of the lordship of us, or of our heirs or successors whomsoever, notwithstanding, to the aforesaid religious men, I have wholly conferred, given and granted, and by this my present charter confirmed. Moreover, all the lands and pastures of the said religious men, I have likewise given and granted to them free and quit, that no other person, secular or ecclesiastic, at any time of the year, shall have any commoning in any of the lands, pastures, and woods of the same Monks ; nor at any time shall any one, as of custom, dare or presume to challenge or demand to himself any common or vicinage in the said lands and pastures and woods to the prejudice of the said religious men ; but the said religious men shall keep and hold all their lands, pastures, and woods to their own use, and without any challenge and demand shall peaceably possess the same. Also, I have given to the said Monks free liberty and license to make and construct a weir in the river Ystoth, where the said religious men have lands on both sides of the river, whensoever and as often as they shall please and to them it shall seem expedient. Also, I have given and granted to the said Monks liberty at all times to buy and sell and to exercise all their businesses, in all my lands and all my lordship, and liberty ; and acquittance of all toll, passage, or pontage, and of all other customs, exactions, and demands to me, and to my heirs and successors whomsoever belonging or appertaining, either on land or sea, or in sea-ports or on the sea-shore, in towns, castles, or also in all other places of my lordship. And whatsoever the aforesaid Monks of Stratflur, in all my lands which I have, or which by the favour of God I hereafter shall have, of lands and pastures, or other goods and things whatsoever, either by purchase or by oblation of the living, or by the testament and last will of the dead, or by any just means may obtain, it shall, for me and my heirs and successors for ever, be firm and unshaken to them. Therefore all the lands and pastures and woods aforesaid, with all their bounds and appurts, and moreover all the donations, grants and confirmations, and the liberties above expressed and named, in fields and woods, in wood and plain, in land arable and not arable, in meadows, feedings and pastures, in ground cultivated and uncultivated, in land, upon land and under land, in the sea and in the ports and shores of the sea, to the abovenamed Monks of Stratflur, for me and all my heirs and successors whomsoever, I am bound wholly to keep, defend, and maintain, and also to

warrant against all men and women, and to keep quiet and peaceable in all things, and this in all the places and lands which I now have and possess, and which hereafter I shall possess, and insomuch as by God's disposal my donation shall extend all the aforesaid donations, grants, confirmations and liberties, to the aforesaid religious men, I have, for me and all my heirs and successors whomsoever, given, conferred, and granted, and also confirmed, for ever. Therefore, whosoever of my heirs and successors, these my donations, grants, confirmations and liberties, shall hold firm and unshaken, and the same shall increase and confirm with his seal, shall be filled with every heavenly benediction and grace, and shall be blessed with the dew of heaven above and the fatness of the earth below : but he who shall attempt to infringe or weaken the same, may God weaken him and take him quickly from the face of the earth, and let not his name be written amongst the just in the Book of Life ; but may he in the end incur the indignation and curse of God Almighty and His glorious Mother, and all the saints and elect of God, and my own. Therefore that all the faithful these my donations, grants, liberties, and confirmations may hold, and keep valid, firm, and acceptable for ever, and that no man may ever infringe the same, I have strengthened them with the impression of my seal. These being witnesses, the Lord Aman then Abbot of Stratflur, Gervase Prior, Adam Subprior, John son of the master, Cadugan Crañh and Llewelyn Bach, Monks of the said House of Converts, Brother Madoc the son of Gowigeneb, Aman Voil, masters of the sheep and cows, Brother Griffin, and Brother Meiler the son of Llewelyn of the seculars ; Owen son of Griffin, then Archdeacon of Cardigan, Llewelyn son of Remoric, then Dean of Upper Ayron, Cadugan son of Griffin Glassour, and Master Traharn Cogh, Griffin son of Meredith, my brother, Owen son of Morgan, son of Eyvann, Owen son of Morgan ap Rees, Hoel son of William Coch, Tharn son of Philip, Gwillim ap Philip, Griffin son of Gourgenev Vichan, and others. And we, the donations, grants, and confirmations aforesaid, holding firm and valid the same for us and our heirs, as much as in us lies, to our beloved in Christ Llewelyn the new Abbot, and the convent of the said place, and to their successors for ever, do grant and confirm, as the charters and letters aforesaid reasonably testify. Moreover, willing to do the aforesaid Abbot and convent more abundant grace in this behalf, we have granted for us and our heirs, and by this our charter confirmed, to the same Abbot and convent, that although they, or any of their predecessors, the liberties and acquittances in the aforesaid letters and charters contained, or

either of them in any case arising, have not hitherto used, nevertheless the same Abbot and convent and their successors, all the liberties and acquittances aforesaid, and every of them, may hereafter fully enjoy and use, without the hindrance or impediment of us or our heirs, or of our Justices, Escheators, Sheriffs, or other of our Bailiffs, or Ministers whomsoever, for ever. Moreover, of our special grace we have granted to the aforesaid Llewelyn now Abbot of Stratflur, and the convent of the same place, that they and their successors for ever may have free warren in all their demesne lands in the counties of Cardigan and Carmarthen; so nevertheless that the same lands be not within the metes of our forest, so that no one may enter the same lands to chase in the same, or to take anything which to warren belongs, without the license and will of the said Abbot and convent or their successors, upon forfeiture to us of £10. Wherefore we will and firmly command, for us and our heirs, that the aforesaid Abbot and convent and their successors for ever, have free warren in all their aforesaid demesne lands; so nevertheless that the same lands be not within the metes of our forest, so that no one may enter the same to chase therein, or to take anything which to warren belongs, without the license and will of the said Abbot and convent or their successors, upon forfeiture to us of £10, as is aforesaid. These being witnesses, A.<sup>1</sup> Bishop of St. David's, and R. Bishop of Landaff, the Prior of Carmarthen, Gry de Briene, William Banastre of Haden Hall, our Justice of South Wales, and others. Given at Carmarthen the twenty-eighth day of October in the year of the reign of our most dear father and lord the King of England the 43rd, and of his reign of France the 30th, and of our Princedom of Wales the 27th.<sup>2</sup> And we, the donations, grants, and confirmations aforesaid, holding firm and valid the same for us and our heirs, as much as in us lies, do accept, approve, ratify, and the same to our beloved in Christ, Llewelyn now Abbot of the place aforesaid, and the convent of the same place, and their successors, by the tenor of these presents, do grant and confirm for ever, as the charters and letters aforesaid reasonably testify; and as the same Abbot and convent and their predecessors, the lands and possessions aforesaid have reasonably had and held, and as they do now at present have and hold, and as they have hitherto reasonably used and enjoyed the liberties and customs aforesaid. In testimony whereof we have caused these our letters to be made patent. Witness, ourself at Westminster, the

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<sup>1</sup> Adam Houghton, 1361-1389.

<sup>2</sup> A. D. 1369.

twentieth day of October, in the fourth year of our reign.<sup>1</sup> And we, the charters and letters aforesaid of such liberties, privileges, and acquittances not revoked, we do by the advice and assent of the Lords spiritual and temporal being in our parliament, holden at Westminster in the first year of our reign, approve, ratify, and confirm, as the charters and letters aforesaid reasonably testify, and as the same Abbot and convent, the same liberties, privileges, and acquittances, and every of them, from the time of the making of the charter and letters aforesaid, have been accustomed hitherto reasonably to use and enjoy. In testimony whereof, witness the King, at Westminster, the eighth day of July.<sup>2</sup>

“BY WRIT OF PRIVY SEAL.

“Translated from an examined office copy of the original copy.

“JON<sup>S</sup> HEWLETT.

“[Transcribed from a copy in the possession of James Davies, Esq., Moorecourt, county of Hereford, by the Rev. W. J. Rees, Rector of Cascob, county of Radnor, July 13, 1833.]”

*Calendar of Patent Rolls, Henry VII. Vol. 12.*

23 Henry VII, p. 2, 1507-08. (9) 23.

“ $\frac{1}{4}$  March.

“Inspeximus and confirmation to the abbot and convent of Strata florida or Stratfleur, in Wales, of patent, 8 July, 3 Henry VI [p. 2, m. 5], inspecting and confirming patent, 20 Oct., 4 Richard II [p. 1, m. 13], inspecting and confirming a patent of Edward prince of Wales, dated 28 Oct., 43 Edward III, and 27th year of his principedom, inspecting and confirming with an additional grant of free warren, the following grants, viz.:—

“1. Charter, 2 Oct. 10 Edw. III [No. 9] inspecting and confirming, with additional grant, “charter” [patent], 10 Nov., 14 Edw. II [p. 1, m. 6] inspecting and confirming with additional privileges.

“A. Patent, 27 May, 13 Edw. I [Welsh Roll, 13 Edw. I, m. 2] inspecting and confirming.

“1. A charter of Resus prince of Wales and his three sons Griffin, Resus, and Meredith, founding and granting possession to the said monastery of Stratfleur.

“2. A charter of Henry II, dated at Winchester, confirming a grant of Resus, son of Griffin.

<sup>1</sup> A.D. 1380.

<sup>2</sup> A.D. 1423.



"3. Charter, 6<sup>1</sup> April, 1 John [p. 2, m. 15] confirming all the donations made to the monastery.

"B. A charter of Maylgun, son of Resus, prince of South Wales, dated 22 Jan. A.D. 1198.

"C. A charter of Resus, son of Resus, dated 14 Dec. A.D. 1198.

"D. A charter of Resus, son of Griffin, son of Resus the Great, dated A.D. 1202.

"E. A charter of Mailgon, junior, son of Mailgon, son of Resus, prince of South Wales.

"H. A charter of Cananus, son of Meredith, son of Oweyn, to the same monastery."

*Patent Roll, 23 Henry VII, part 2, m. (9) 23.*

"D' confirmac'one p' Abb'e de Strata Florida.

"R' Om'ib' ad quos et c' sal'm Inspexim' l'ras patentes . . . . Nos autem donac'o'es concessiones et confirmac'o'es p'd'cas ratas h'entes et g'atas eas p' nob' et heredib' n'ris quantu' in nob' est acceptam' approbam' ratificam' et eas dil'e'is nob' in X'p'o Llonuue Abb'i loci p'd'c'i et eiusdem loci Conuentui et eor' successorib' tenore p'senciu' imp'p'm concedim' et confirmam' sicut carte et l're p'd'c'e r'onabilit' testant' et p'ut iidem Abbas et conuentus et eor' p'decessores t'ras et possessiones p'd'cas r'onabilit' h'uerunt et tenuerunt et iam in p'senti h'ent et tenent et lib'tatib' et consuetudinib' p'd'c'is lucusq' r'onabilit' usi sunt et gauisi.

"In cuius rei testimoniu' has l'ras n'ras fieri fecim' patentes.

"T' me ip'o apud Westm' vicesimo die Octobr' anno regni n'ri quarto.

"Nos autem carta (*sic*) et l'ras p'd'cas de huiusmodi lib'tatib' priuilegiis et quietaneis minime reuocatis de auisiamiento et assensu d'nor' sp'ualiu' et temporalu' in parlamento n'ro apud Westm' anno regni n'ri primo tento existenciu' approbam' ratificam' et confirmam' p'nt carte et l're p'd'c'e testant' et p'nt iidem abbas et conuentus lib'tatib' priuilegiis et quietaneis p'd'c'is uti debent. Ip'iqu' et eor' p'decessores Abb'is et Conuentus loci p'd'c'i lib'tatib' priuilegiis et quietaneis illis et ear' qual'ta tempore confecc'o'is cartar' et l'rar' p'd'car' hactenus r'onabilit' uti et gaudere consueuerunt. In cuius rei testimoniu' has l'ras n'ras fieri fecim' patentes.

<sup>1</sup> "*Sexto*":—but it is the 11th April in the charter roll of John and in the inspeximus thereof to Henry VI inclusive.

"T' me ip'o apud Westm' octauo die Julii anno regni n'ri t'cio.

"Nos autem l'ras cartas concessiones et confirmac'o'es p'd'e'as ac om'ia et singula in eisdem contenta rata h'entes et g'ata eap' nob' et heredib' n'ris quantu' in nob' est acceptam' et approbam' ac dil'e'is nob' Abb'i et Conuentui loci p'd'e'i et successorib' suis ratificam' et confirmam' p'nt l're et carte p'd'e'e r'onabilit' testant'.

"In cuius et c'.

"T' Re apud Westm' quarto die Marcis."

[Translation.]

"Concerning the confirmation for the abbot of Strata Florida.

"The King, to all to whom, etc., greeting. We have inspected the Letters patent . . . And we, holding the gifts, grants, and confirmations aforesaid firm and valid, for us and our heirs, as much as in us lies do accept, approve, ratify them, and do grant and confirm them to our very dear in Christ Llonuuc,<sup>1</sup> abbot of the place aforesaid, and to the convent of the same place, and to their successors for ever by the tenor of these presents, as the charters and letters aforesaid reasonably witness, and as the same abbot and convent and their predecessors reasonably had and held, and now in the present time have and hold, the lands and possessions aforesaid, and hitherto reasonably used and enjoyed the liberties and customs aforesaid. In witness whereof we have caused these our Letters patent to be made.

"Witness ourself at Westminster, on the 20th day of October, in the fourth year of our reign.<sup>2</sup>

"And we do approve, ratify, and confirm the charters and Letters patent of such liberties, privileges, and acquittances, by no means revoked by the advice or assent of the lords spiritual and temporal being in our parliament held at Westminster, in the first year of our reign, as the charters and letters aforesaid witness, and as the same abbot and convent ought to use the liberties, privileges, and acquittances aforesaid, and the same and their predecessors, abbots and convents of the place aforesaid, hitherto reasonably were accustomed to use and enjoy those liberties, privileges, and acquittances, and every of them, from the time of the making of the charters and letters aforesaid. In witness whereof we have caused these our Letters patent to be made.

<sup>1</sup> Llewelyn.

<sup>2</sup> A.D. 1380.

“Witness ourself at Westminster, on the 8th day of July, in the third year of our reign.<sup>1</sup>

“And we, holding the charters, grants, and confirmations aforesaid, and all and singular the things in the same contained firm and valid, for us and our heirs, as much as in us lies do accept and approve of those things, and do ratify and confirm them to our very dear the abbot and convent of the same place and to their successors, as the letters and charters aforesaid reasonably witness.

“In (witness) whereof, etc.

“Witness the King at Westminster, on the 4th day of March” [A.D. 1508].

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#### COINING IN WALES.

*Letters and Papers, Foreign and Domestic, Henry VIII.*

Vol. vii, p. 477.

“Examinations before the King’s Commissioners in the Marches of Wales, at Shrewsbury, 1 October, 26 Hen. VIII.

[1534.]

“No. 1225, 2 Oct., R. O.

“Ivan ap Ho’ll, of th’age of xl yeres, weuer, of the lordship of Talgarth, saith that the Saturdaye bifer mydsomer day last past he wente from the house of Thomas ap Guill’m in Strateflere into the chamber of Dan<sup>2</sup> Richard Smyth into the abbay ther, and by reason that he promysed fortnight bifer to brynge to the saied Dan Richard certain moulds to coyne grots, the said Dan Richard upon the said Setterday in the mornynge came barelegged to the lodgyng of this deponent, requyryng hym to com to hire masse, saying that he had fyer and all other thynges redye to make the said coyne. Whereupon this deponent cam Immediately to the chamber of the said Dan Richard, fyndyng ther in the said chamber fyer redye made and a Iron pan to melte metall in, and after the said Dan Richard fette the hed of a tyn spone from a wall plate ther, and toke it to this deponent, which put the same in the Iron pan’ and melted it, and w’t (with) the same coyned two grots in two moulds, the said Dan Richard standynge bye and lokyng upon hym, and the dore faste shutte upon theym; and when this deponent and the said Dan Ric’ p’ceyued that the prynts of the said grots being in the said molds were not so p’fecte as the prynt of a grote, they caste oute the said

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<sup>1</sup> A.D. 1425.

<sup>2</sup> A title commonly given to monks.

molds w't (with) the ij grots in theym owte of the wyndowe, and an oth'r moneke of the same house, walkyng bye the same wyndow, p'ceyvving the said molds easte owte, toke theym uppe and broughte theym to his abbot; whereupon the said Abbot came to the Dore of the said Dan Ric', knocking thereat, whom this deponent let in, the said abbot asking what savor was in the chamber, and what they did easte owte at the wyndowe, and what the Iron pot did ther; whereunto this deponent saied that they did nothyng therew'th. Whereuppon the sayd abbot arrested this deponent and the said Dan Richard, and layed theym fast in Irons.

"further he saith, that he found the said moulds in the house of oon (one) Hopkins ap David ap Richard, which was there lefte by Richard Vaugh'n, who remayneth in Ward in the castell of Wygmore, as Cecyle ap Jankyn reoported unto this deponent; and he saith that this was the firste and the laste that eu'r he made.

"All which moulds and other instruments therunto belonging were sende to master Secretary to London by my lord flerrers."

"At Shrewsbury, the 2 Oct., 26 Hen. VIII.

"Md. That the second daye of this instant monyth of October Dan Richard Smith, moncke p'fessed, in the monastery of Strata fileere, of th'aige of xl yeres or therabout, do confesse that oon Ieu'n ap Richard did come unto me the setterday before mydsomer daye last past w'thin the precinete of the said mon' wher that I was in company w'toon ll'n ap Ho'll ap Jenkyn, and there the said Ieu'n sate downe w't us in the house of oon John ap Dyo, being w't'in the precinete of the same mon', unto the tyme that we had ther dronken a pot of ale or two, and then and ther the said Ieu'n began to proffer money for the said ale, whiche we ther dranke; and I saied he shoulde paye none, and there I incontynently drewe to my purse and paied for o'r (our) drynkes which we had dronke, and dep'ted from the said house of John ap Dyo, and went streight unto the church, the said Ieu'n following me into the church, and saied: Sir, if it be youre pleasure, I pray you that I may have a woorde or two w't yowe, for I here saye that yo be an honest man, and if yo wilbe ruled by me, I truste to make yo rycher by xl shillings. Then saied I: Howe may that be? And the said Ieu'n answered: I will not showe you onles that I have a secrete place to com'on w't you in. Then saied I: I praye you to go w't me to my chamber, and there we shall com'on at large; and w't that we wente togeder to my chamber. And when the said Ieu'n was ther he began and saied thus: Syr, this is the matier; you be a preest, and I

thyneke I may be bold to shoue unto you my mind, for I can make a grote as well as any man ; nay, qy [query] I, that I cannot bel[eue]. Well, then, said the said Ieu'n, it shall cost you no more but a potte of ale to se it doon. And then I saied : Lette me se when ye begyn. Nay, said Ieu'n, no man shall se me doyn'g it, but go youe forth a certen season and ye shall se my coyn'g anon. And w't that I wente forth, stode at the chamber dore a litle while, and at last I demaunded of hym, haste thowe not doon yet ? Yes, hardeley. Come in, saied the said Ieu'n ; and when I cam in he showed me two newe grots, and his molds withall, which, when I sawe and handeled w't my handes—Well, s'r, then saied I, yo'r pot of ale ye shall have for youre labo'r which I promysed ; and with that I wente forthe of my chamber, leuyng hym alone ther, and called oon of my brethren named Dan Thomas Dyrham, and desired him to go fetche my master, th'abbot of our said house, to my chamber, who incontynently came into my said chamber, and asked me what was the cause that I sent for hym. Then said I : S'r, here is a man, I knowe not what he is, but here may ye se hys workmanship what he hath done ; and in the meantime this said Ieu'n wold conveid the saide moulds w't the two grots in theym, and have casten theym under my bed, being in the said chamber, which I wolde not suffer him to do ; and then and ther the said abbot tok the said moulds w't the two grots and put them in his sleeve, and incontynently went to my lorde fferrers and showed him all the hole mattier ; and in the mean space the said Abbot com'aunded the said Ieu'n to be sette in Irons w't'in his said Abbaye, and sette me and two of my Brethrene, the oon named Dan Morgan ap John, and th'other Dan Cuthbert, to kepe sure the said Ieu'n. And upon the declaration of the said matier to my lord fferrers, the said lord fferrers sente his Constable and other his s'vants to bryng unto him the said Ieu'n and me, which were brought unto hym according to his com'aundm't, and sette both me and the said Ieu'n in Irons, and so we cam befor hym and told hym as is affor rehersed ; and then he com'aunded my Irons to be taken of, and to go home to my monastery agayn. And then the said Ieu'n, seeing that I was lewsed and goyng homward, sayd : My lord fferrers, do ye let the monk go ? I woll cause hym to be sende fore agayne as fer as ever I go, and I woll geve no aunswer to no thyng untill I come befor the Kings counsaill ; and with that my lord fferrers toke me agayne and layed Irons upon me, and so have I contynued in pryson in Carmarthen by the space of xi weeks. A month I co'tinued in the Castell of Aberustw't in pryson, with Sir Willia' Thomas, Knight, and there have contynued eu'r sythens until this tyme."

*State Papers Domestic, 26 Henry VIII. Vol. vii, No. 1264.*

*Rowland Lee, Bp. of Coventry and Lichfield, to Cromwell,  
Secretary.*

"After most hartly Recom'endac'ons you shalbe adu'tisseyd that acording to you' letter directed to me in favor of the Abbot of Strata florida I haue put the sayd Abbot yn q'ett possession and sworne hys adu'sary the monk of the howse thayre to hys obedience. And senys that tyme I resauyed your other Letter in fauor of Mr. Darbe[']s father, where in alsoe I haue wrytten my letter to my officer at Lich' [Lichfield] trysting hee shall haue good successe. If thayre be any other thyng I ca' or may doe I shalbe Righte glad to acco'plisse the same, besecheyng you to haue in Remembrans my letter latly send to you by Mr. Howlte and seying it is you' mynd. I shalbe at a ende wt that p'son hee wholde soe c'passe [compasse] the mater, as I doute not but hee may, that I when at q'etnesse therew'h, for it is not unknowing the besyness that I haue here, and say it is a good sporte to see on' theffe bryng in a nother as it is most com'only dayly thus. I pray almighty God long to p'serue you and send you' harts desyre. From Salop thys xvijth day of October [1534].

"I haue made Repa'cione for thys wynter of the Castell of ludlow, trustyng of you' goodnesse in myne allowance, and I pray you co'tinue good master to this berer, who I trust wyll be an honestte man.

"Your most bounden,

"ROLAND Co: et LICH."

*Endorsed :*

"To his moste entierly  
Beloved frende, Master  
Secretary [Cromwell]."

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*Patent Roll, 28 Henry VIII, part 4, m. 23.*

"P' Abb'ia de Strata Florida de confirmac'.

"Rex om'ib' ad quos et c' sal't'm cum p' quendam actum in parlamento n'ro apud London' t'eo die Nouembr' anno regni n'ri vicesimo primo inchoat' et deinde usq' Westm' adiornat' et p' diu'sas p'rogac'o'es usq' ad in quartum diem Februarii ultimu' p'tit' continuat' et tunc ibidem tent' int' alia inactitat' existit q'd nos h'erem' et gauderem' nob' et hered' n'ris imp'p'm om'ia et singula Monast'ia prioratus ac alias domos religiosas monachor' canonicor' et monialiu' quibuscumq' gen'ib' siue diu'sitatib' h'it' regular' siue ordinu' vocarent' siue no'iarent'

que non h'ebant t'ras ten' redditus decimas porc'o'es et alia hereditamenta ultra clarum annu' valorem ducentar' librar' dict' clar' valores d'eor' Monast'ior' ac priorat' capiend' ac construend' s'e'd'm clarum valorem in Sc'eio n'ro c'tificat'. Et simili modo q'd h'erem' et gauderem' nob' et hered' n'ris om'es et om'imod' scit' et circuit' ear'dem religiosar' domor' ac om'ia et singula Man'ia grangias mesuagia t'ras ten' reu'siones redditus s'uicia decimas pensiones porc'o'es aduocac'o'es p'ronatus eccl'iar' capellar' annuitates iura condic'o'es et alia hereditamenta quicumq' eisdem Monast'iiis prioratib' siue domib' religiosis non h'entib' ut p'dicit' t'ras ten' vel hereditamenta ultra p'd'e'm annuu' valorem ducentar' librar' p'tinen' siue spectan' adeo plene et integre p'ut Abb'es priores Abb'isse et alie gub'natores huiusmodi Monast'ior' prioratuu' et aliar' religiosar' domor' suar' H'end' et tenend' om'ia et singula p'missa cum om'ib' suis iurib' p'ficuis iurisdicc'o'ib' et co'moditatib' nob' h'ered' et successorib' n'ris imp'p'm ad inde faciend' et utend' n'ras p'prias voluntates. Cumq' tamen in actu p'd'e'o p'uideat' q'd nos aliquo et quocumq' tempore post confecc'o'em actus illius valeam' et potuissem' ad benepl'itum n'r'm ordinare constituere et declarare p' l'ras n'ras patentes sub magno sigillo n'ro conficiend' q'd ille et tales huiusmodi p'd'e'ar' domar' religiosar' quas supp'mend'et dissoluend' esse noluissem' essent p'senerarent starent continuarent et p'manerent in eisdem suis corporib' corporat' ac in eisdem suis essencialib' statu qualitate condic'o'e robore et eff'c'u tam in possessionib' q'am p'ut essent et fuissent ante confecc'o'em actus p'd'e'i absq' supp'ssione siue dissolu'o'e ear'dem aut alicuius partis inde p'textu et auctoritate eiusdem actus. Et q'd quel't talis huiusmodi et declaratio p' nos sic fiend' et ordinand' esset bona scura et eff'c'ualis capitalib' gub'natorib' huiusmodi religiosar' domor' quas supp'mend' et dissoluend' esse noluissem' et successorib' suis iuxta et s'e'd'm tenores et eff'cus t'rar' patenciu' inde conficiend' aliqua re siue aliquib' reb' in actu p'd'e'o incont'ariu' inde fact' non obstante p'ut in actu p'd'e'o int' alia plenius continet'. Pretextu cuiusquidem actus Monast'ium siue Abb'ia B'e Marie de Strata Florida in Southwall' Meneu' dioc' in Com' n'ro Cardigan' p' eo q'd non h'et t'ras ten' redditus decimas porc'o'es aut hereditamenta ultra d'e'm clarum annuu' valorem ducentar' librar' p'ut c'tificat' in d'e'o Sc'eio n'ro et ibidem plane liquet in manib' et disposic'o'e n'ris iam existit utrum dissolu'et' s'e'd'm formam et eff'c'm actus p'd'e'i an p'maneret et continuaret in suo pristino et essenziali statu condic'o'e et qualitate p'ut ante confecc'o'em actus p'd'e'i fuit. Nos volentes d'e'm Monast'ium siue Abb'iam B'e Marie de Strata Florida p'd'e'a p' diu'sis

causis et considerac'o'ib' nos ad p'sens sp'alit' mouentib' in suo pristino essenciali statu corpore condic'o'e et qualitate p'manere et continuare p'ut ante confece'o'em actus p'd'e'i fuit ac p'ut esset si actus ille fact' not' fuisset. Sciatis igit' q'd nos ob fauorem quem erga Monast'ium siue Abb'iam de Strata Florida p'dict' quod non extendit' in t'ris ten' et aliis hereditamentis suis ad annu' valorem ducentar' librar' in com' p'd'e'o ordinis Cistercienu' Meneu' dioc' gerim' et h'em'. Et ut Abbas et religiose p'sone eiusdem Monast'ii diuino cultu ibidem celebrand' deuocius intendant hospitalitatem ac alia pietatis op'a ibidem ub'ius exerceant de gr'a n'ra sp'ali ac ex c'ta sciencia et mero motu n'ris ordinauim' constituim' et declarauim' ac p' p'sentes quantum in nob' est constituim' ordinam' erigim' et renouam' q'd p'd'e'm Monast'ium siue Abb'ia B'e Marie de Strata Florida p'd'e'a imp'p'm continuabit stabit et p'manebit in eodem suo corpore corporat' ac in eodem suo essenciali statu gradu qualitate et condic'o'e tam in possessionib' q'am in om'ib' aliis reb' tam sp'ualib' q'am temporalib' et mixtis p'ut fuit tempore confece'o'is actus p'd'e'i aut aliquo tempore ante confece'o'em actus p'd'e'i absq' supp'ssione siue dissoluc'o'e aliquali eiusdem Monast'ii siue Abb'ie B'e Marie de Strata Florida p'dict' aut alienius partis vel parcelle inde vigore et auctoritate actus p'd'e'i. Et ult'ius de ub'iori gr'a n'ra sp'ali concessim' ac p' p'sentes concedim' q'd Ric'us Talley p'fessus ordinis Cistercienu' sit deinceps Abbas d'e'i Monast'ii siue Abb'ie B'e Marie de Strata Florida p'd'e'a ac p' abb'e et capitale gub'natore eiusdem Monast'ii siue Abb'ie B'e Marie de Strata Florida p'd'e'a deinceps h'eat' reputet' et acceptet' eisdem modo forma qualitate gradu condic'o'e dignitate statu et robore p'ut idem Ric'us quarto die Februarii ultimo p't'ito aut antea fuit. Et q'd om'es alie religiose p'sone eiusdem Monast'ii siue Abb'ie B'e Marie de Strata Florida p'dict' modo existen' aut que quarto die Februarii ultimo p't'ito ibidem fuerunt et iam a d'e'o Conuentu non separant' sint de cet'o et deinceps Conuent' eiusdem Monast'ii siue Abb'ie b'e Marie de Strata Florida p'dict' ac p' Conuentu ejusdem Monast'ii siue Abb'ie B'e Marie de Strata Florida p'd'e'a h'eant' reputent' et acceptent' eisdem modo et forma qualitate condic'o'e et statu p'ut d'e'o quarto die Februarii ultimo p't'ito aut antea fuerunt. Et q'd p'd'e'us Ric'us et religiose p'sone p'd'e'e et om'es successores sui h'eant et h'ebunt huiusmodi et eandem successionem in om'ib' et p' om'ia p'ut ante d'e'm quartum diem Februarii ultim' p't'itum h'uerunt et h'ere debuerunt ac p'ut h'uissent et h'ere debuissent valuisent et potuissent si actus p'd'e'us fact' non fuisset. Et q'd p'd'e'us Ric'us p' nomen Abb'is d'e'i Monast'ii siue Abb'ie B'e Marie de



Strata Florida p'd'c'a et successores sui Abb'is d'e'i Monast'ii siue Abb'ie B'e Marie de Strata Florida p'd'c'a sint deinceps p'sone h'iles impl'itare et impl'itari in om'ib' pl'itis sectis querelis acc'o'nib' peticoib' iam realib' q'am p'sonalib' et mixtis et aliis quibuscumq' in quibuscumq' Cur' et locis ac coram quibuscumq' Judicib' siue Justic' tam sp'ualib' q'am temporalib' licet tangat nos et hered' n'ros et ad faciend' ex'cend' et exequend' om'ia et singula alia quecumq' ut Abb'es d'e'i Monast'ii siue Abb'ie B'e Marie de Strata Florida p'd'c'a p'nt fecissent et fac'e potuissent ante confecc'o'em actus p'd'e'i ac p'ut fecissent et fac'e potuissent si idem actus minime fact' et edit' fuisset. Et q'd p'd'e'us Ric'us et religiose p'sone p'd'e'e ut Abbas et Conuentus Monast'ii siue Abb'ie B'e Marie de Strata Florida p'd'c'a et succ' sui Abb'es et Conuentus Monast'ii siue Abb'ie illius h'eant gaudeant et teneant ac h'ere possint et valeant imp'p'm totum p'd'c'm Monast'ium siue Abb'iam B'e Marie de Strata Florida p'd'c'a necnon eccl'iam campanit' scitum cimiteriu' fundum ambitum p'cinctum et circuitum eccl'ie eiusdem et Grang' de Mevennyth Pennarth' Co'moscowth' Blaynearon' Amnyuyok' Trevais Morbabichan' Diwarchyn' Havoodwen' Nauntvaye Hab'de Honowe Co'moddithur Habermewitt' Morwayr'aker et Beallte ac om'ia et singula alia Man'ia grangias mesuagia t'ras ten' redditus reu'siones s'uicia possessiones p'petuitates et hereditamenta n'ra quecumq' necnon co'moditatis ornamenta iocalia bona et catalla ac alias res quecumq' tam sp'ulia q'am temporalia eidem Monast'io siue Abb'ie quonismodo spectan' siue p'tinen' eisdem modo forma p'ut h'erent gauderent et tenerent aut h'ere gaudere et tenere potuissent et valerent si actus p'd'e'us fact' et edit' non fuisset. Et p' maiore securitate de et in p'nissi sp'fatis Abb'i et Conuentui Monast'ii siue Abb'ie de Strata Florida p'd'c'a et successorib' suis adhibend'. Sciatis insup' q'd nos de ub'iori gr'a n'ra sp'iali dedim' et concessim' ac p' p'sentes dam' et concedim' p'fatis abb'i et Conuentui Monast'ii siue Abb'ie B'e Marie de Strata Florida p'd'c'a totum d'e'm Monast'ium siue Abb'iam de Strata Florida p'd'c'a necnon totum scitum fundum ambitum p'cinctum circuitum eccl'iam campanil' et cimiteriu' eiusdem Monast'ii siue Abb'ie B'e Marie de Strata Florida p'd'c'a ac om'ia et singula d'nia Man'ia mesuagia t'ras ten' grangias p'dict' boscos subboscos redditus reu's' s'uicia feod' milit' ward' maritag' relenia escaet' parcas warrenna stagna viuaria piscarias co'ias rectorias de Llangarik' Bangorien' dioc' et Penkarrek' Meneu' dioc' vicarias aduocac'o'es et p'ronatus eccl'iar' capellar' et cantariar' t'ras glebas penc'o'es pore'o'es decimus oblac'o'es cur' let' vis' Francipleg' lib'tates iurisdice'o'es franchisesias et alia iura possessiones et hereditamenta quecumq' ac om'ia bona et catalla campanas

iocalia ornamenta et alia quecumq' eidem Monast'io siue Abb'ie spectan' siue p'tinen' et que p'd'c'i Abbas et Conuent' quarto die Februarii ultimo p't'ito aut antea vel postea in iure Monast'ii siue Abb'ie illius h'uerunt tenuerunt vel gauisi fuerunt et que ad manus n'ras r'one et p'textu actus p'd'c'i deuenerunt et deuenire debuerunt adeo plene et integre ac in tam amplis modo et forma p'ut d'c'i Abbas et Conuentus d'c'o quarto die Februarii ultimo p't'ito et ante face'o'em actus p'd'c'i in iure monast'ii siue Abb'ie p'dict' illa h'uerunt tenuerunt vel gauisi fuerunt et adeo plene et integra ac in tam amplis moda et forma p'ut illa r'one p'textu vigore et auctoritate actus p'd'c'i ad manus n'ras deuenerunt aut in manib' n'ris iam existunt vel exist'e deberent. H'end' tenend' p'd'c'm Monast'ium siue Abb'iam B'e Marie de Strata Florida p'd'c'a ac om'ia et singula cet'a p'missa cum suis iurib' p'tin' et co'moditatib' uniu'sis p'fato Ric'o Abb'i d'c'i Monast'ii siue Abb'ie illius et Conuentui eiusdem loci et successorib' suis in puram et p'petuam elemosinam imp'p'm de nob' hered' et successorib' n'ris ut de fundac'o'e n'ra et non alit'. Soluend' et faciend' capitalib' d'nis t'rar' et ten' p'd'cor' et cet'or' p'missor' redditus et s'uicia inde eis et eor' cuil't debita et de iure consueta. Prouiso q'd p'fati Abbas et Conuentus unanimi consensu p' se et successorib' suis concedunt nob' et hered' n'ris q'd p'd'c'i Abbas et Conuentus et successores sui imp'p'm soluant aut solui faciant nob' hered' n'ris om'es decimas et primos fructus quocienscumq' euenire contig'nt eodem modo et forma ac si d'c'm Monast'ium siue Abb'ia nunq'm supp'ss' dissolut' siue dat' nob' p' actum p'd'c'm non fuisset ac s'c'd'm vim formam et eff'c'm cuiusdam actus parliamenti p' decimis et primis fructib' edit' et p'nis'. Et d'c'i Abbas et Conuentus concedunt p' p'sentes q'd ip'i et successores sui imp'p'm bene et fidelit' custodiant et obseruabunt om'es et om'imod' regulas ordinac'o'es constituc'o'es et statuta p' nos ut sup'mu' caput Anglicane eccl'ie siue ministros n'ros et successores n'ros unu' regimen d'c'i Monast'ii et religiosor' viror' eiusdem Monast'ii conc'nen' siue tangen' impostum p'uidend' assignand' et appunctuand' eo q'd expressa mencio et c'.

"In cuius et c'.

"T' R' apud Westm' xxx die Januarii.

"P' ip'm Regem et c'."

[Translation.]

"For the Abbey of Strata Florida, concerning confirmation.

"The King to all to whom, etc., greeting. Whereas by a certain Act in our Parliament commenced at London on the third day of November, in the twenty-first year of our reign,

and afterwards adjourned to Westminster, and continued by divers prorogations until the fourth day of February last past, and then and there held, amongst other things it was enacted that we should have and enjoy to us and our heirs for ever, all and singular the monasteries, priories, and other religious houses of the monks, canons, and nuns, by whatsoever kinds or differences of rules or orders had they should be called or named, which had not lands, tenements, rents, tithes, portions, and other hereditaments beyond the clear annual value of two hundred pounds, the said clear values of the said monasteries and priories to be taken and construed according to the clear value certified in our Exchequer; and in like manner, what we should have and enjoy to us and to our heirs, all and all manner of sites and circuits of the same religious houses, and all and singular the manors, granges, messuages, lands, tenements, reversions, rents, services, tithes, pensions, portions, advowsons, patronage of churches, chapels, annuities, rights, conditions, and other hereditaments whatsoever to the same monasteries, priories, or religious houses, not having, as it is aforesaid, lands, tenements, or hereditaments beyond the aforesaid annual value of two hundred pounds pertaining or belonging, as fully and wholly as the abbots, priors, abbesses, and other rulers of such kind of monasteries, priories, and other their religious houses. To have and to hold all and singular the premises, with all their rights, profits, jurisdictions, and commodities to us, our heirs and successors for ever, to do therewith and to use at our own will. And whereas, nevertheless, in the Act aforesaid it is provided that we, at any and whatsoever time after the making of that Act, may and could at our pleasure ordain, constitute, and declare by our Letters Patent to be made under our great seal, that those and such of the like aforesaid religious houses, which we should not wish to be suppressed and dissolved, should strictly abide, stand, continue, and remain in the same their bodies corporate and in the same their essential estate, quality, condition, strength, and effect, as well in possessions as they might be and might have been before the making of the Act aforesaid, without suppression or dissolution of the same, or of any part thereof; by pretext and authority of the same Act. And that every such and such kind of declaration by us so to be made and ordained should be good, secure, and effectual to the chief governors of such kind of religious houses which we might not wish to be suppressed and dissolved, and to their successors according to, and in accordance with, the tenors and effects of the Letters Patent to be made thereupon, any thing or any things in the Act aforesaid made therein

to the contrary notwithstanding, as in the Act aforesaid amongst other things more fully is contained. By pretext of the which Act the monastery or abbey of the Blessed Mary of Strata Florida in South Wales, of the diocese of St. David's in our county of Cardigan, because it has not lands, tenements, rents, tithes, portions, or hereditaments beyond the said clear annual value of two hundred pounds, as is certified in our said Exchequer and there plainly appears, is now in our hands and disposal whether it shall be dissolved according to the form and effect of the Act aforesaid, or shall remain and continue in its former and essential state, condition, and quality as it was before the making of the Act aforesaid. We, willing that the said monastery or abbey of the Blessed Mary of Strata Florida aforesaid, for divers causes and considerations us at present especially moving, shall remain and continue in its former essential state, body, condition, and quality as it was before the making of the Act aforesaid, and as it would be if that Act had not been made. Know ye, therefore, that we, on account of the favour which we bear and have towards the monastery or abbey of Strata Florida aforesaid, which is not extended in its lands, tenements, and other hereditaments to the annual value of two hundred pounds, in the county aforesaid, of the Cistercian order, of the diocese of St. David's, and that the abbot and religious persons of the same monastery, by divine care to celebrate there, may more devoutly extend hospitality, and more abundantly exercise other works of piety there, of our special grace, and of our certain knowledge and mere motion, have ordained, constituted, and declared, and by these presents we do constitute, ordain, erect, and renew as much as in us lies that the aforesaid monastery or abbey of the Blessed Mary of Strata Florida aforesaid shall for ever continue, stand, and remain in the same its body corporate, and in the same its essential state, grade, quality, and condition as well in possessions as in all other things, as well spiritual as temporal, and mixed, as it was at the time of the making of the Act aforesaid, or at any time before the making of the Act aforesaid, without the suppression or any kind of dissolution of the same monastery or abbey of the Blessed Mary of Strata Florida aforesaid, or of any part or parcel thereof, by force and authority of the Act aforesaid. And moreover of our more abundant special grace we have granted, and by these presents do grant, that Richard Talley, professed of the Cistercian order, may be the next following abbot of the said monastery or abbey of the Blessed Mary of Strata Florida aforesaid, and may be held, reputed, and accepted for abbot and chief governor of

the same monastery or abbey of the Blessed Mary of Strata Florida aforesaid from this time in the same manner, form, quality, grade, condition, dignity, state, and strength as the same Richard was on the fourth day of February last past, or before, and that all others now being religious persons of the same monastery or abbey of the Blessed Mary of Strata Florida aforesaid, or who on the fourth day of February last past were there, and now are not separated from the said convent, may be from henceforth and from this time the convent of the same monastery or abbey of the Blessed Mary of Strata Florida aforesaid, and may be held, reputed, and accepted for the convent of the same monastery or abbey of the Blessed Mary of Strata Florida aforesaid, in the same manner and form, quality, condition, and state as they were on the said fourth day of February last past, or before. And that the aforesaid Richard, and the religious persons aforesaid, and all their successors, may have and shall have such kind of and the same succession in all things and throughout all times as they had and ought to have before the said fourth day of February last past, and as they should have had and ought to, would, and could have if the Act aforesaid had not been made. And that the aforesaid Richard, by the name of abbot of the said monastery or abbey of the Blessed Mary of Strata Florida aforesaid, and his successors, abbots of the said monastery or abbey of the Blessed Mary of Strata Florida aforesaid, may be from this time forth the proper persons to implead and to be impleaded in all pleas, suits, quarrels, actions, petitions, as well real as personal, and mixed, and other things whatsoever, in whatsoever courts and places, and before whatsoever judges or justices, as well spiritual as temporal, when it may touch us and our heirs, and to do, exercise, and execute all and singular other things whatsoever as the abbots of the said monastery or abbey of the Blessed Mary of Strata Florida aforesaid should have done and could have been able to do before the making of the Act aforesaid, and as they should have done and could have been able to do if the same Act had not been made and declared at all. And that the aforesaid Richard and the religious persons aforesaid, as the abbot and convent of the monastery or abbey of the Blessed Mary of Strata Florida aforesaid, and their successors, abbots and convents of that monastery or abbey may have, enjoy, and hold, and can and may have for ever, all the aforesaid monastery or abbey of the Blessed Mary of Strata Florida aforesaid, also the church, chime of bells, site, cemetery, soil, ambit, precinct, and circuit of the church of the same, and the granges of Mevennyth, Pennarth,

Commoscowth, Blaynearon, Annynyok, Trevais, Morvabichan, Diwarehyn, Havodwen, Nauntvaye, Haberdchonowe, Commoddithur, Habermewill, Morvayraker, and Beallte, and all and singular our other manors, granges, messuages, lands, tenements, rents, reversions, services, possessions, perpetuities, and hereditaments whatsoever; also the commodities, ornaments, jewels, goods and chattels, and other things whatsoever, as well spiritual as temporal, to the same monastery or abbey in whatsoever manner belonging or pertaining, in the same manner and form as they would have, enjoy and hold, or could and might have, enjoy and hold if the Act aforesaid had not been made and declared. And for giving greater security of and in the premises as the aforesaid abbot and convent of the monastery or abbey of Strata Florida aforesaid and to their successors, know ye moreover that we of our more abundant specified grace have given and granted, and by these presents do give and grant to the aforesaid abbot and convent of the monastery or abbey of the Blessed Mary of Strata Florida aforesaid, all the said monastery or abbey of Strata Florida aforesaid; also the whole site, soil, ambit, precinct, circuit, church, chime of bells, and cemetery of the same monastery or abbey of the Blessed Mary of Strata Florida aforesaid, and all and singular the lordships, manors, messuages, lands, tenements, granges aforesaid, woods, underwoods, rents, reversions, services, knights' fees, wards, marriages, reliefs, escheats, parks, warrens, pools, fish ponds, fisheries, commons, the rectories of Llangerik of the diocese of Bangor, and Penkarrek of the diocese of S. David's, the vicarages, advowsons, and patronages of the churches, chapels, and chantries, lands, glebes, pensions, portions, tithes, oblations, courts leet, views of frankpledge, liberties, jurisdictions, franchises, and other rights, possessions, and hereditaments whatsoever; and all goods and chattels, bells, jewels, ornaments, and other things whatsoever to the same monastery or abbey belonging or pertaining, and which the aforesaid abbot and convent had, held, or enjoyed on the 4th day of February last past, or before or after, in right of that monastery or abbey, and which came, and ought to come to our hands by reason and pretext of the Act aforesaid, as fully and wholly and in as ample manner and form as the said abbot and convent had, held, or enjoyed those things on the said 4th day of February last past, and before the making of the Act aforesaid, in right of the monastery or abbey aforesaid, and as fully and wholly, and in as ample manner and form as they, by reason, pretext, strength, and authority of the Act aforesaid, came to our hands, and now are or ought to be in our hands. To have and

to hold the aforesaid monastery or abbey of the Blessed Mary of Strata Florida aforesaid, and all and singular other the premises, with all their rights, appurtenances, and commodities to the aforesaid Richard, abbot of the said monastery or abbey, and to the convent of the same place, and to their successors in pure and perpetual alms of us and our successors for ever, as of our foundation, and not otherwise, paying and doing to the chief lords of the lands and tenements aforesaid, and of other the premises, the rents and services thereof due to them and to each of them, and of right accustomed, provided that the aforesaid abbot and convent by unanimous consent, for them and their successors do grant to us and our heirs that the aforesaid abbot and convent and their successors for ever shall pay, and shall cause to be paid to us [and] to our heirs, all tithes and first-fruits as often soever as they shall happen to come forth, in the same manner and form as if the said monastery or abbey had never been suppressed, dissolved, or given to us by the Act aforesaid, and according to the force, form, and effects of a certain Act of Parliament made and provided for tithes and first-fruits. And the said abbot and convent concede by these presents that they and their successors shall for ever well and faithfully keep and observe all and every kind of rules, ordinances, constitutions, and statutes by us, as supreme head of the Anglican Church, or our ministers and our successors hereafter to be provided, assigned, and appointed, concerning or touching our rule of the said monastery or religious men of the same monastery, because express mention, etc.

“In (testimony) whereof, etc.

“Witness the King at Westminster on the 30th day of January [A.D. 1537].

“By the King himself, etc.”

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POSSESSIONS OF THE ABBEY *temp.* HENRY VIII.

*“Valor Ecclesiasticus temp. Hen. VIII.*

[Transcript of Return, 26 Hen. VIII, First Fruits Office.]

“Abbathe exempt’ de Strata Florida in dictis Decanatu et Arch’natu in com’ Cardigan’.

“Strata Florida Monasterium Exempt’ Ric’us abbas ibidem monachus religios S. Bened’ci ordinis Cistern’ et conventus ejusdem loci tenent et possident monasterium p’d’e’u’ cum om’ibus lib’tatib’ suis et jurisdicc’onib’ maneriis hamelett<sup>s</sup> et locis s’bscript’ videl’t grangiam de Meneveth cum suis pertinen’ ad valenciam per annu’ 20*l.* Pennarth juxta pred’e’m monasterium per annu’ 18*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.* Cumustorth cum Comortha ib’m et in Pennarth pred’e’a per annu’ 10*l.* 16*s.* 8*d.* Blenairon cum Comortha ibidem 6*l.* 10*s.* Evynyoke per annu’ 6*l.* Tref-vaes et Morvabichan per annu’ 5*l.* Diwarchen per annu’ 5*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.* Havodwen, 6*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.* Nantbay, 8*l.* per annum. Ab’dehenowe, 5*l.* per annum. Cu’motdoytho’ 4*l.* et Ab’mywel per annu’ 5*l.* Qui quidem grangia terr’ redd’ et ten’ta d’ei abbas et conventus et eorum predecessores tempore Resi ap Tewdo’ Maure principis Wallie usq’ modo tenuerunt possederunt et pacifice occupaverunt d’e’m monasteriu’ grang’ et ten’ta pred’e’a cum pertinen’ ex fundac’one d’ei principis in puram et perpetuam elemosyna’ absq’ interupc’one una cum r’e’ctoria et gleba de Pencarrok annui valoris 6*l.* ult<sup>a</sup> partem vicarij ibidem communib’ annis sic d’eo mon’ appropriat’ imperpetuum. Et ultra eccl’iam parochialem de Llangeryk in Powizia Bangor dioc’ valor 24 marc’ per annum que non oneratur hic eo q’ d’ea r’e’ctoria non consistit infra dioc’ Meneven’. Sum’a valoris d’eorum ten’torum cum r’e’ctoria de Pencarrok

“122*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.*”

“D’ quibus

Sinodal’ Proc’ et al’ Resolue’

In denariis sol’ annuatim in visitac’one arch’ni pro sinodal’ et procurac’o’ib’ 5*s.* 9*d.* Et in den’ijs annuatim sol’ d’no Regi Henrico Octavo supremo capiti eccl’ie Anglicane et Wallican’ qui Romano pontifici consueverunt 7*s.*

“0*l.* 12*s.* 9*d.*”

“Feod’ Sen<sup>li</sup>.

Item idem abbas petit allocac’o’em p’ feodo annuati’ sol’ de ten’tis pred’e’s d’no de Ferrers senescallo maneriorum et ten’torum ut de feodo ib’m consuet’

Sum’a deduct - - - 3*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.*

Et sic reman’ clare - - - 3*l.* 19*s.* 5*d.*

Et sic reman’ clare - - - 118*l.* 7*s.* 3*d.*

Decima inde - - - 11*l.* 16*s.* 8*d.*

ob’ q’



*“Compot’ Ministrorum Domini Regis temp. Hen. VIII.*

[Abstract of Roll, 32 Hen. VIII, Augmentation Office.]

*“Nuper Monasterium de Strata Florida, com’ Cardigan’.*

	£	s.	d.
Dowerthen—Firma grangiae - - -	7	0	0
Strata Florida—Reddit’ scitus nuper monaster’ -	0	5	0
Hawodwen—Reddit’ in grangia -	14	14	1
Hawodwen—Consuetudo vocat’ Comortha -	7	11	8
Nantbay—Firma grangiae - - -	7	0	0
Blanarryan—Reddit’ assis’ in grangia -	10	13	4
Blanarryan—Comortha ibidem -	6	8	4
Haberdoneth—Firma grangiae -	5	0	0
Pennarth—Reddit’ assis’ in grangia -	23	19	1
Pennarth—Comortha ibidem -	5	0	0
Mevenyth, Cobscoyth, Pennarth, Blanayron Guhy- noge—Reddit’ lanarum vocat’ custome wolle -	1	0	0
Trayen y menythe—Firma decim’ -	0	3	4

*“Com’ Caerm’.*

Penkarok—Firma Rector’ - - -	8	13	4
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*“Com’ Card’.*

Conniscoith—Reddit’ assis’ in grangia -	11	17	6
Conniscoith—Comortha ibidem -	2	6	8
Langeryk—Firma Rector’ -	10	0	0
Meveneth—Firma grangiae -	34	3	2
Meveneth—Comortha ibidem -	10	14	8
Hehynok—Firma grangiae -	15	16	6
Hehynok—Comortha ibidem -	6	13	4
Comotherer—Firma grangiae -	6	0	0
Trevaes Morga Vagan—Reddit’ grangiae -	6	0	0
Abermoyle—Reddit’ grangiae -	6	0	0”

[From the Transcript of a Roll in the Exchequer, containing the Particulars of the Taxation of the Spiritual and Temporal Possessions of the Clergy of the Diocese of Bangor. (Tax. Pap. Nic. V.) See *Record of Caernarvon*.]

*“In decanatu de Arostly.*

*“B’n’ficia Abb’is de Strata Florida x<sup>ma</sup> Cicestr’ Ordinis, Tax. xxiiij m<sup>are</sup> x<sup>m</sup> xxxij<sup>s</sup>.*

*Bona Abbath’ de Strata Florida.*

*Meneven’ Dioc’.*

*Abb’s h’et quandam t’ram in  
Archid’ de Meryomnyth ponit’  
ad firmam ——— Tax. vij<sup>s</sup> viij<sup>d</sup> — x<sup>ma</sup> viij<sup>d</sup>.*

*Sm<sup>a</sup> bono’ Abb’is de Strata  
Florida ——— vij<sup>s</sup> viij<sup>d</sup>. Sm<sup>a</sup> x<sup>m</sup> viij<sup>d</sup>.”*

## TAXAT. P. NICH. IV, 1291.

“*Spiritual.* Beneficium in Dioc. Bangor, £16. *Temporal.* Dioc. Menaven. in Archid. Brecon, £7 15s. In Archid. Kardigan et Kaermerdyn, £22 15s. 4d. Dioc. Assaven, £2 9s. Dioc. Bangor, 6s. 8d.

“N.B.—The Benet College MS. saith 7 monks at Stratflour; but the Prior and 7 religious had pensions. A.D. 1553.’ (*Tanner.*)

## STRATHFLERE.

*Augmentation Office. Miscellaneous Book, No. 245, f. 170.*

## PROMISES of Pensions.

Signed T. CRUMWELL.

	£	s.	d.
To Richard Talley, Abbot . . . .	40	0	0
Richard Smyth . . . .	3	0	0
Lewis Llansadder <sup>1</sup> . . . .	3	0	0
Morgan ap Johns . . . .	3	0	0
David Morgan <i>als.</i> Talley . . . .			

Also in

*Augmentation Office. Miscellaneous Book, 232, f. 220.*

## GRANTS in the 31st year [Hen. VIII], 1539-40.

Same as the above, and

To John Tork <sup>2</sup> . . . . .	2	3	0
Thomas Durham . . . . .	4	0	0

Also in

*Augmentation Office. Miscellaneous Book, 235.*

## GRANTS, May, in the 33rd year [Hen. VIII], 1541-42.

To Richard Mayott . . . . .	2	3	4
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*Clerical Subsidy, No. 7, 1512, St. David's Diocese.*

The names of all and singular the Pensioners who paid the subsidy in the Diocese of St. David's, due at the Feast of St. Michael the Archangel, 1558.

<sup>1</sup> Qy. Llangadome.

<sup>2</sup> Qy. York.

<i>Imprimis.</i>			<i>Pension.</i>		<i>Subsidy.</i>
*Richard Talley p' ann'	...	...	xlii.	...	iiijl.
Gryfyth Wyllyams	...	...	xxvili. xiijs. iiijd.	...	liijs. iiijd.
Thomas Sayes	...	...	iiijl.	...	vjs.
*Lewys Llansadome	...	...	iiijl. vjs. viiijd.	...	vjs. viiijd.
*John York	...	...	iiijl. xixs. viiijd.	...	vjs. xjd. ob.
*Thomas Durham	...	...	xlii.	...	xxs.
*Morgan Jones	...	...	iiijl.	...	vjs.
Morgan Jenkyns	...	...	iiijl. vjs. viiijd.	...	vjs. viiijd.
John Wyllyams	...	...	iiijl. xiijs. viiijd.	...	vijs. vd. ob.
Henry Wellynton	...	...	iiijl. xs. viiijd.	...	ixs. ob. q.
David ap Howell	...	...	iiijl.	...	viijs.
John Bathon	...	...	xvjli. p' iij. annis.	...	
John Dudley	...	...	iiijl.	...	viijs.
Morgan Nycholas	...	...	xlijs. vjd.	...	iiijs. iiijd.
James Nicholas	...	...	iiijl.	...	vjs.
John Cantor	...	...	iiijl.	...	vjs.
Sum'a subsid. xvjl. xjs. iiijd. ob. q.					
P'er me Henr. Morgan, nup' Meneven'.					

No. 5. Second part of the subsidy.

Second part  
July 1557

N.B.—The names marked thus \* are evidently Pensioners of Strata Florida Abbey.—S. W. W.

*Q. R. Suppression Papers, 8354, Public Record Office.*

“Strataflorida nup’ Monaster’ in Com’ Cardigan’.

“Valor diu’s p’cell’ possessionu’ d’ci nup’ Monast’ in Sowth-wallia D’ Anno Regni Henr’ viii<sup>ui</sup>. Dei’ gra’ Anglie Francie et Hib’nie Regis fidei defensor’ et in t’r’ Anglican’ et Hib’nice Eccl’ie sup’mi [capitis] xxxv<sup>to</sup> ut inferius. Videl’t:—

SCITUS NUP' MONAST' P'D CUM TERR'  
D'NICAL'. *Valet in—*

Redd'n eum uno Gardino uno pomar' et una p'cell' Terr' vocat' the Cowart Grene p' Annu' ... ..	_____	v.s.
Redd' et firm' dimiss' diu's' p'son' ib'u' p' Inden' p' Annu' ... ..	viiijl. ixs.	
Redd' xix. Topstans lane p'cii le Topstan jd. Ann't'i deli'b'and' p' man' Tenen' hui' Gr'ungie... ..	xixd.	
Redd' ferine Aven' al' Otemele in tenur' Ricii ap Morgan p' Inden' sub Sigill' D'ni Regis Cnr' Augmen' Revene' Corone s' dat' p'mo die Marcii Anno Regni R' p'd' xxxiiij <sup>to</sup> Hend' sibi' p' t'm'o vigint' et uni' Annor' ult'a le Otemele in man' Hugon' ap D'd ap In'n Loyd' Ych'n sup'iu' on'at' r'in'fa Su'ma' de viijli. ixs. p' Annu' ... ..	iiijli. xs. vjd.	

GRANG' DE HAWODWEN' IN COM' CARDI-  
GAN'. *Valet in—*

Redd' xxiij <sup>th</sup> Teils Aven' p'cii le Teile, vj <sup>d</sup> . An'ti' delib'and' p' man' Tenen' istius Grang'	...	xjs. vjd.
Redd' vij Teylles Kylmarshe p'cii le Teylle vjd. An'ti' delib'and' p' man' d'cor' Tenen'	...	iijs. vjd.
Redd' uni' porei An'ti' delib'and' p' unu' Tenent' ib'm p' Annu'	...	iijs.
Redd' C iiij Gallinar' p'cii gallin' jd. de- lib'and' p' man' Tenen' ib'm p' Annu'	...	xvs.
D' vjs. viij <sup>d</sup> . p'ven' de octo ouib' p'cii Onis. xd. delib'and' q'lib' ij <sup>do</sup> Anno p' Tenen' ib'm.		
D' vijli. xjs. viij <sup>d</sup> . de consuetud' vocat' Co'morthe quolib' t'cio An'o delib'and' p' Tenent' ib'm	...	----- xiiijli. xiijs. jd.

GRANG' DE BLANARIAN IN COM' CARDI-  
GAN'. *Valet in—*

Redd' et Firm' ib'm dimiss' diu'sis p'sonis p' Indent' p' An'	...	ixli. iijs. iiij <sup>d</sup> .
Redd'u iij teils kylm'che p'cii cuiuslt' teile vjd. an'ti' delib'and' p' Tenent' hui' grang' (sic)	...	xviij <sup>d</sup> .
Redd'u cuiusd'm consuet' voc' exauiā an'ti' soluend' p' eosd'm tenent'	...	xxijs.
Redd'u diern' op'u' p'uenien' de diu'sis tenen' d'ce grangie p' annu'	...	vjs. vjd.
D' xs. p'uenien' de xij Ouibus p'cii cuiuslt' Onis xd. delib'and' quolt' s'c'do An'o p' d'cos Tenent'.		
D' vjli. viijs. iiij <sup>d</sup> . p'uenien' de quod'm redd'u voc' Co'morthe delib'and' p' d'cos tenent' quolt' tercio Ano'	...	----- xli. xiijs. iiij <sup>d</sup> .

GRANG' DE PENNARTH' IN COM' P'D'CO.  
*Valet in—*

Redd' et firm' ib'm dimiss' diu's p'sonis t'm p' Indent' q'm ad volunt' d'ni p' An'	...	xxijli. xvs. iiij <sup>d</sup> .
Redd'u vij teil' Auenaru' p'cii cuiuslt' teile vj <sup>d</sup> . anti' delib'and' p' tenent' istius grangie	...	iijs. vjd.
Redd'u v teill' kylm'che p'cii cuiuslt' teille vjd. an'ti' delib'and' p' eosd'm tenent'	...	ijs. vjd.
Redd'u cuiusdam consuetud' voc' Exauiā an'ti' delib'and' p' tenent' grang' p'd'ee	...	xijs.
Redd'u diern' op'u' p'uenien' de diu'sis tenen' d'ce grang' p' An'	...	vs. ix <sup>d</sup> .
D' xijs. vjd. p'uenien' de xv Ouibus p'cii cuiuslt' Onis xd. delib'and' p' d'cos tenent' quolt' ij <sup>do</sup> Anno.		
D' Cs. p'uenien' de quod'm redd'u voc' Co'morthe delib'and' p' d'cos tenent' q'lt' tercio Anno.	-----	xxiiijli. xixs. jd.

CUSTOM WOLL'E INFRA GRANGIAS DE MEVENYTH' COMUS-  
COITH' PENNARTH BLANNARIEN ET HENHYNOG'.  
*Valet in—*

Redd' dimis' Will'mo David ap Ieu<sup>n</sup> p'  
Indentur' sigill' Conuent' sigillat' et  
reddet inde p' Annu' ... ..  
xxs.

DECIME DE GRANGIA DE BLANARIAN'.  
*Valet in—*

P'ficus d'caru' decimar' voc' Trayen' y  
Menychein man' Ph'i Gitto p' Indent'  
et reddet inde p' An' ... ..  
iijs. iiijd.

RECTOR' DE PENKAROK' IN COM' KARM'-  
THEN'. *Valet in—*

Decimis ib'm cu' om'ibus suis p'tin'  
ac cu' uno Ten'to annex' Rector' p'd'ce  
voc' Ty y p'son' nup' in man' Will'i  
Morgan' dimis' Ieu<sup>n</sup> Lloid' ap Roth-  
eroth' p' Indent' sigill' Conuent'  
sigillat' et reddet inde p' Annu' ...  
viiijl. xvs. iiijd.

GRANG' DE COMUSCOITH' IN COM' CARDI-  
GAN'. *Valet in—*

Redd' et Firm' ib'm dimis' diu'sis p'sonis  
p' Indentur' p' Annu' ... .. xjli. viijs. viijd.  
Redd' cuiusd'm consuetudinis voc' Exautia  
ant'i' delib'and' p' tenent' d'ce  
grangie ... .. viijs. xd.  
D' vjs. viijd. p'uenien' de viij<sup>o</sup> Ouibus p'cii  
cuiuslt Ouis xd. delib'and' p' tenent'  
d'ce grang' quolt ij<sup>do</sup> Anno.  
D' xlvjs. viijd. p'uenien' de quod'm redd'u  
voc' Co'martha soluend' p' eosd'm  
tenent' quolt ij<sup>o</sup> Anno. ————— xjli. xvijs. vjd.

GRANG' DE MEVENYTH' IN COM' CARDI-  
GAN'. *Valet in—*

Redd' et Firm' ib'm dimis' diu'sis p'son p'  
Indent' p' An' ... .. xxxijli. xiiijd.  
Redd'u xxxj teill' Kylm'che p'cii cuiuslt  
teille vjd. ant'i' delib'and' p' tenet'  
hui' g'unge (sic) ... .. xvs. vjd.  
Redd'u viij teill' Auen' p'cii cuiuslt teill's  
vjd. delib'and' ant'i' p' man' d'cor'  
tenenc' ... .. iijs.  
Redd'u cuiusd'm consuetud' voc' Exautia  
an'ti' delib'and' p' anted'cos tenent'  
Redd'u dienu' op'u' in man' d'coru' tene'c'  
an'ti' ... .. ijs.  
D' xxvijs. iiijd. p'uenien' de xxxiiij<sup>or</sup> Ouib'  
p'cii cuiuslt Ouis xd. delib'and' p'  
anted'cos tenent' quolt ij<sup>do</sup> Anno.  
D' xli. xiijs. viijd. p'uenien' de quod'm  
redd'u voc' Co'martha soluend' p'  
eosd'm tenent' quolt tercio Anno. ————— xxxiiijli. ijs. vijd.

## GRANG' DE HENHYNOG' ET MORVA MAURE IN COM' P'D'CO.

*Valent in—*

Redd' et Firm' dimiss' diu'sis p'son' p'	
Indentur' p' An' ...	viiijl. xviijs. viijd.
Redd'u O'im et sing'laru' Ferine Avenaru'	
voc' Otemele an'ti' delib'and' p' man'	
diu's' temenc' istius grang' ...	xxijs.
Redd'u xviiij. teill' Kym'che delib'and'	
an'ti' p' tenent' d'ce grang' p'cii	
cuiusl't teill'e vjd. ...	ixs.
Redd'u xj teill'e Auen' voc' Otes p'cii le	
teill'e vjd. an'ti' delib'and' p' tenent'	
d'ce grangie ...	vs. vjd.
xx	
Redd' iiij ij gallinara' p'cii cuiusl't galline	
jd. an'ti' delib'and' p' eosd'm tenent'	vjs. xd.
Redd' o'im Frument' al' whete quod D'd	
ap Llu' ap Powell' Firm' grang' de	
Morva Maure an'ti' reddere debet.	
Ac etiam o'im Auenaru' voc' blake	
otes quas Id'm David an'ti' reddere	
debet ...	iiijl. iiijjs. vjd.
Redd'u uni' teile Frument' q'd Llu' ap D'd	
ap Rotheroth' an'ti' delib'are debet...	ijs. vjd.
Redd'u xij truckes Frument' q'd D'd ap	
D'd ap Robert an'ti' solnere debet ...	vijs. vjd.
D' viijs. iiijd. p'uenuen' de x Ouibz p'cii	
cuiusl't Ouis xd. delib'and' p' d'cos	
tenent' quol't ij <sup>do</sup> An'o.	
D' vjli. xiijs. iiijd' p'uenuen' de quod'm	
redd'u voc' Co'mortha soluend' p'	
eosd'm tenent' quol't iij <sup>o</sup> Anuo.	xvli. xvjs. vjd.

Cxxjli. vjs. ixd.

ult'a lxxijs. vjd. p' Ouibz in d'eis  
grang' q'l't s'c'do An'o et xxxviijli.  
xiijs. viijd. p' Co'mortha in eisd'm grang'  
quol't iij<sup>o</sup> An'o.

Repis'—videl't in—

Feod' D'ni Ferris Sen <sup>th</sup> Cur' ib'm p'	
Annu' ...	vjli. xiijs. iiijd.
Feod' Ric'i Devorox Recept' general' o'im	
possessionu' d'ci nup' Mon' p' Annu'	xiiijli. vjs. viijd.
Feod' Ric'i ap Morgan Ball'i Grang' de	
Havodwen p' An' ...	xxvjs. viijd.
Feod' Ph'i Gitto Ball'i Grangie de Blan-	
aria' p' Annu'...	xiijs. iiijd.
Feod' Will'i Ionys Cl'ici Ball'i Grangie	
de Pennarth' p' An' ...	xxvjs. viijd.
Feod' Ioh'is Thom's Ball'i Gr'ungie de	
Comuscoith' p' Annu' ...	xxvjs. viijd.
Feod' Ioh'is Yorke Ball'i Gr'ung' de	
Mevenyth' p' Annu' ...	xxvjs. viijd.
Feod' Will'i Ris ap Morga' Ball'i Gr'ungie	
de Henhinoek' p' Annu' ...	xxvjs. viijd.

xxviijli. vjs. viijd.

Et remanet clare—<sup>xx</sup>iiij viij*li*. xiiij*d*. ult'a Oues quol't s'c'do An'o et Co'mortha quol't tercio An'o ut sup'a.

P' Edward' Gostwyk' Audit'.  
R'.

2. CORNETETHER p' A'm, vj*li*.<sup>1</sup>

(Endorsed) RICHARD DEVORAX.

[Translation.]

Strata Florida, late a monastery in the county of Cardigan.

Value of divers parcels of the possessions of the said late monastery in South Wales, for the 35th year of the reign of Henry the Eighth,<sup>2</sup> by the grace of God King of England, France, and Ireland, Defender of the Faith, and on earth supreme head of the Anglican and Irish Church, as below. That is to say:—

THE SITE OF THE LATE MONASTERY AFORESAID, WITH  
THE DEMESNE LANDS, is worth in—

	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
The rent, with one garden, one orchard, and one parcel of land called the Cowart Grene, by the year ... ..	—	—	—	0	5	6
Rents and farms demised to divers persons in the same place, by Indenture, by the year ... ..	8	9	0			
The rents of 19 Topstans of wool, the Topstan of the worth of 1 <i>d</i> ., annually to be delivered by the hands of the tenants of this grange ... ..	0	1	7			
Rent of oat-meal, otherwise "Otemele", in the tenure of Rice ap Morgan, by Indenture, under the seal of the Lord the King of the Court of the Augmentations of the revenues of his Crown, dated on the first day of March, in the 33rd year of the reign of the King aforesaid [A.D. 1542]. To have to him for the term of 21 years, beyond the oat-meal in the hand of Hugh ap David ap Ivan Lloyd Ychan, charged above in the sum of £8 9 <i>s</i> ., by the year ... ..	4	10	6			

THE GRANGE OF HAVODWEN, IN THE COUNTY OF  
CARDIGAN, is worth in —

The rents of 23 teils of oats, the teil of the worth of 6 <i>d</i> ., annually to be delivered by the hands of the tenants of that grange ... ..	0	11	6
The rents of 7 teyllles of Kylmarshe, the teyllle of the worth of 6 <i>d</i> ., annually to be delivered by the hands of the said tenants ... ..	0	3	6
A rent of one hog, annually to be delivered by the hand of a tenant in the same place, by the year ... ..	0	3	0

<sup>1</sup> Grange of Cwmdauddwr or Cwmtoyddwr.

<sup>2</sup> A.D. 1543-44.

	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
The rents of a hundred and four score (180) hens, a hen of the worth of 1 <i>d.</i> , to be delivered by the hands of the tenants in the same place, by the year ... ..	0	15	0			
Of 6 <i>s.</i> 8 <i>d.</i> issuing from eight sheep, a sheep of the worth of 10 <i>d.</i> , to be delivered every second year by the tenants in the same place.						
Of £7 11 <i>s.</i> 8 <i>d.</i> from a custom called Com'orth, to be delivered every third year by the tenants in the same place ... ..	—			14	14	1
Rents and farms there demised to divers persons, by Indenture, by the year ... ..	9	3	4			
Rent of 3 teils of Kylmarche, of the worth of each teile 6 <i>d.</i> , annually to be delivered by the tenants of this grange ... ..	0	1	6			
The rent of a certain custom called Exactions, annually to be paid by the same tenants ... ..	1	2	0			

THE GRANGE OF BLANARIAN, IN THE COUNTY OF  
CARDIGAN, *is worth in—*

The rent of days' works issuing from divers tenants of the said grange, by the year ... ..	0	6	6			
Of 10 <i>s.</i> issuing from 12 sheep, of the worth of each sheep 10 <i>d.</i> , to be delivered every second year by the said tenants.						
Of £6 8 <i>s.</i> 4 <i>d.</i> issuing from a certain rent called Com'orth, to be delivered by the said tenants every third year ... ..	—			10	13	4

THE GRANGE OF PENNARTH, IN THE COUNTY  
AFORESAID, *is worth in—*

The rents and farms in the same place demised to divers persons, as well by Indenture as at the will of the lord, by the year ... ..	22	15	3			
Rent of 7 teils of oats, of the worth of every teil 6 <i>d.</i> , annually to be delivered by the tenants of that grange ... ..	0	3	6			
Rent of 5 teills of Kylmarche, of the worth of every teil 6 <i>d.</i> , annually to be delivered by the same tenants ... ..	0	2	6			
The rent of a certain custom called Exactions, to be delivered by the tenants of the grange aforesaid...	0	12	0			
The rent of days' works issuing from divers tenants of the said grange, by the year ... ..	0	5	9			
Of 12 <i>s.</i> 6 <i>d.</i> issuing from 15 sheep, of the worth of every sheep 10 <i>d.</i> , to be delivered by the said tenants every second year.						
Of 100 <i>s.</i> issuing from a certain rent called Com'orth, to be delivered by the said tenants every third year ... ..	—			23	19	1

THE CUSTOM OF WOOL WITHIN THE GRANGES OF  
MEVENYTH, COMUSCOITH, PENNARTH, BLANARIAN,  
AND HENHYNOG, *is worth in—*

The rents demised to William David ap Ievan, by Indenture sealed with the seal of the convent, and he renders therefore by the year ... ..	1	0	0			
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THE TITHES OF THE GRANGE OF BLANARIAN  
*are worth in—*

	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
The profits of the said tithes called Trayen y Menyche, in the hand of Phillip Gitto, by Indenture, and he renders therefore by the year ... ..	0	3	4			

THE RECTORY OF PENKAROK, IN THE COUNTY OF  
CARMARTHEN, *is worth in—*

The tithes in the same place, with all its appurtenances, and with one tenement annexed to the rectory aforesaid, called Ty y Parson, late in the hands of William Morgan, demised to Ievan Lloid ap Rotheroth, by Indenture sealed with the seal of the convent, and he renders by the year ...	8	15	4			
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THE GRANGE OF COMUSCOITH, IN THE COUNTY OF  
CARDIGAN, *is worth in—*

The rents and farms in the same place demised to divers persons by Indenture, by the year ...	11	8	8			
The rent of a certain custom called Exactions, annually to be delivered by the tenants of the said grange ... ..	0	8	10			
Of 6s. 8d. issuing from eight sheep, of the worth of each sheep 10d., to be delivered by the tenants of the said grange every second year.						
Of 46s. 8d. issuing from a certain rent called Com'orth, to be paid by the same tenants every third year ...	—	11	17	6		

THE GRANGE OF MEVENYTH, IN THE COUNTY OF  
CARDIGAN, *is worth in—*

The rents and farms in the same place demised to divers persons by Indenture, by the year ...	32	1	2			
The rent of 31 teills of Kylmarche, of the worth of every teill 6d., annually to be delivered by the tenants of this grange ... ..	0	15	6			
The rent of 8 teills of oats, of the worth of every teill 6d., to be delivered annually by the hands of the said tenants ... ..	0	4	0			
The rent of a certain custom called Exactions, annually to be delivered by the aforesaid tenants ...	1	0	11			
The rent of days' works in the hands of the said tenants annually ... ..	0	2	0			
Of 28s. 4d. issuing from 34 sheep, of the worth of every sheep 10d., to be delivered by the aforesaid tenants every second year.						
Of £10 14s. 8d. issuing from a certain rent called Com'orth, to be paid by the same tenants every third year ... ..	—	34	3	6		

THE GRANGES OF HENYNOG AND MORVA MAURE, IN  
THE COUNTY AFORESAID, *are worth in—*

The rents and farms demised to divers persons by Indenture, by the year ... ..	8	17	8			
The rent of all and singular the Oat-meal, called "Otomele", annually to be delivered by the hands of divers tenants of that grange ... ..	1	2	0			
The rent of 18 teills of Kylmarche, to be delivered annually by the tenants of the said grange, of the value of every teill 6d. ... ..	0	9	0			
						g 2

The rent of 11 teils of oats, called "Otes", of the worth of the teil 6 <i>d.</i> , annually to be delivered by the tenants of the said grange ...	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
The rents of four score and two hens, of the worth of every hen 1 <i>d.</i> , annually to be delivered by the same tenants ...	0	5	6			
The rent of all the grain, otherwise whete, which Lluellyn ap Powell, farmer of the grange of Morva Maure, ought to render annually. And also of all the oats, called "blake otes", which the same David ought to render annually ...	4	4	6			
The rent of one teil of corn which Lluellyn ap David ap Rothereth ought to deliver annually ...	0	2	6			
The rent of 12 "truckes" <sup>1</sup> of corn, which David ap David ap Robert ought to pay annually ...	0	7	6			
Of 8 <i>s.</i> 4 <i>d.</i> issuing from 10 sheep, of the worth of every sheep 10 <i>d.</i> , to be delivered by the said tenants every second year.						
Of £6 13 <i>s.</i> 4 <i>d.</i> issuing from a rent called Commorth, to be paid by the same tenants every third year ...	—	—	—	15	16	6

£121 7 9  
beyond 72*s.* 6*d.* for the sheep  
in the said granges every  
second year, and £38 14*s.* 8*d.*  
for Com'orth in the same  
granges every third year.

*Reprises—that is to say, in —*

The fee of the Lord Ferrers, Steward of the Court in the same place, by the year ...	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
The fee of Richard Devorax, Receiver-General of all the possessions of the said late Monastery, by the year ..	6	13	4			
The fee of Richard ap Morgan, bailiff of the grange of Havodwen, by the year ...	13	6	8			
The fee of Philip Gitto, bailiff of the grange of Blanarian, by the year ...	1	6	8			
The fee of William Jonys, clerk, bailiff of the grange of Pennarth, by the year ...	0	13	4			
The fee of John Thomas, bailiff of the grange of Comuscoith, by the year ...	1	6	8			
The fee of John Yorke, bailiff of the grange of Mevenyth, by the year ...	1	6	8			
The fee of William Ris ap Morgan, bailiff of the grange of Henhinock, by the year ...	1	6	8			
	—	—	—	27	6	8

And there remains clear £88 1*s.* 2*d.* beyond the sheep every second year, and the Com'orth every third year, as above.

By Edward Gostwick, the King's auditor.

2 CORNETH, by the year, 6*li.*<sup>2</sup>

(Endorsed) RICHARD DEVORAX.

<sup>1</sup> Query : "Strikes".

<sup>2</sup> Grange of Cwmdauddwr or Cwmtoyddwr.

## LEASE TO RICHARD DEVEREAUX, 20TH MARCH, 1547.

This document is from the Land Revenue Record Office, and is probably the first lease of the abbey-lands granted after their lapse to the Crown.

*“Strataflorida nup’ Monast’ in Com’ Cardigan—Edwardus sextus Dei gra’, Angliæ Ffraunciæ et Hib’niæ Rex fidei defensor et in terr’ Anglicanæ et Hib’niæ, sup’mus. O’ibus ad quos p’sentes l’re p’venerint sal’tem.*

*“Sciatis quod nos aviserent Cancellarii et gen’alium sup’visor’ curie nostre Augmentac’onu’ et revenc’onu’ Corone n’re tradidimus concessimus et ad ffirmam dimissini’ ac p’ p’sentes tradimus concedimus et ad firmam dimittimus Ric’o Devereux, Armig’o, Domum et scitum nup’ Monast’ii de Strata Florida in com’ n’ro Cardigan modo dissolut’, ac omnia domos, edificia, horrea, stabula, columbaria, ortos, pomaria, gardina, t’ras et solum n’ra quecumque infra scitum septum ambitum circuitum et precinctum d’c’i nup’ monast’ii existen’: Ac om’ia illa terras, pratas, pasturas et hereditament’ n’ra voe’ lez Demeynes landes d’c’i nup’ monast’ii in Straflorida seu alibi in Com’ p’d’; Ac om’es illas grangias de Deverthyn, Hawodwen, Blanarion, Pennarth, Meueneth, Comuscoithe, et Henynocke in p’d’ Com’ Cardigan; ac totam illam grangiam n’ram de Comotherer in Com’ Radnor’; ac grangiam nostram de Ab’moyle in Com’ Mongome’ cum eorum juribus et p’tin’ univ’sis. Ac omnes illas Commorthas necnon omnia et sing’la Denarios firmas exitus revenciones et proficua quocunque de temp’e in temp’us provenien’ renovan’ acciden’ seu contingen’ ac nob’ heredibus et successoribus n’ris spectan’ per tenentes dictas grangias de Havodwen, Blanarion, Pennarth, Comuscoithe, Meveneth, et Henenock, solvend’ et de eisdem tenen’ quol’t tercio anno levand’ secundem consuetudinem p’rie ib’m prout antehac consuet’ fuit. Ac omnia messuagia, domos, edificia, t’ras, ten’ta, prata, pascas, pasturas, decimas, curias letas, heriott’, relevia, p’ficua, comoditates, revenciones, emolumenta, et hereditamenta quecumque in Deverthyn, Havodwen, Blanarion, Pennarth, Meveneth, Comoscoithe, et Henynocke, in d’e’o Com’ Cardigan, ac in Comotherer in d’e’o Com’ Radnor, ac in Ab’moyle in d’e’o Com’ Moung’me’ ac alibi ubicunque eisdem Com’ p’d’ grangiis seu eorum alicui quoquo modo spect’ et p’tin’ aut cum eisdem seu eorum aliquo’ Dimiss’ locat’ usitat’ vel occupat’ existen’. Que grangie et cet’a om’ia et sing’la p’missa p’d’ nup’ monast’ro Dudum spectabant et p’tinebant ac p’cell’ possessionum inde nup’ exiterunt. Except’ tamen semper nob’ et heredibus et*

successoribus n'ris omnino reservatis om'ib's grossis arboribus et boscis de in et super p'missis crescentes et existentes. Habendum et tenendum p'd' scitum, grangias, mess' t'ras, ten'ta, prata, pascas, pasturas, decimas ac cetera omnia et sing'la p'missa superius expressa et specificata cum eorum p'tinentes universis, except' p'f' Ric'o Devereux executoribus et assignatibus suis a festo S'ci Mich'is a'i d'i ultimo preterito usque ad finem termini et pro termino viginti et unius annorum extunc p'x' sequent'm et firmare complend'm. Reddendo annuatim nob' heredi's et successoribus nostris de et pro p'd' scitu, grangiis, terris, ten'tis et ceteris p'missis preter commorthan p'd' centum et unam libras, octo solidos, et octo denarios, legalis monete Anglie ad ffestum Annunciacionis B'æ Marie Virginis et S'ci Mich'is Arch' vel infra unum mensem post utrumque festum ffestorum illorum ad manus receptor' revenc'onu' curie Augmentacionu' et revenc'onu' Corone n're in South Wallia p' temp'e existen' p' equales porciones solvend' durante termi'o p'd'. Ac reddend' nob' heredibus et successoribus de et pro Commortha p'd' quolibet tercio anno cum et quando p'f' solvi et levare debeat triginta octo libras, quatuordecim solidos et octo denarios ad ff'm S'ci Mich'is Arch' tantum solvend' ad manus Receptor' p'd' p' tempore existen'. Et volumus et per hos presentes concedimus p'f' Ric'o Devereux, executoribus et assignatibus suis quod nos heredes et successores nostri dictum Ric'm executores et assignates suos de omnibus et omnimod' feod' annuitatibus et denariorum summis ac omnibus quibuscunque de p'missis seu de aliqua inde parcell' quoquo modo exeuntibus seu solvendis vel super inde oneratis seu onerand' p'terquam de redd' superius p' p'sentes reservatis ac p'terquam de feod' ballivor' et collector' ac receptor' reddituum p'd' grangiarum de Doverthyn, Hawodwen, Blanarian, Pennarth, Comoscoithe, Mevenythe, Henynocke et Comortherer. Ac p'terquam de ffeod' capitalis seneschalli et generalis receptor' omnis terr' ten'tor' et possessionum d'ci nup' monast'ii versus quascunque p'sonas de tempore in tempus exonerabimus acquietabimus et defendemus durante termino p'd'. Quodcunque nos heredes et successores n'ri omnia et singula p'missa in maeremio tantummodo de tempore in tempus reperari sustentari et manuteneri faciemus sumptibus n'ris p'priis et expensis durante termino p'd'. Predictus tamen Ric'us Devereux executores et assignates sui sumptibus suis p'priis et expensis omnes alias et necessarias reparaciones p'missor' in omnibus et per omnia p'terquam in maeremio p'd' de tempore in tempus supportabunt sustenebunt et manutenebunt durante termino p'd'. Ac illa sufficient' repac' in fine termini p'd' dimittunt. Et volumus et per hos presentes concedimus p'fato Ric'o Devereux, executoribus et assignis suis quod bene licebit eis de tempore in

tempus capere, percipere, et habere competen' et sufficien' hedgebote, housebote, ploughbote et cartbote de in et super p'missis crescen' ac ibidem et non alibi expend' et occupand' durante termino p'd'. Proviso semper quod si contingerit dictos redditus a retro fore in parte vel in toto per spacium quinque septeman' post aliquod ffestum p'd' ffestorum S'e'i Mich'is Arch' et Annunciaconis B'æ Marie Virginis quo ut prefertur solvi debeat si modo petatur quod tunc hec p'sens dimissio et concessio vacua sit ac pro nullo habeatur. Aliquo in p'sentibus in contrarium inde non obstante aliquo statuto, actu, ordinacione, provisione, proclamacione sive restricione in contrariu' inde h'eat' edit' ordinat' seu provis' aut aliqua alia re causa vel materia quacunque in aliquo no obstante. In ejus rei testimonium has litteras nostras fieri fecimus patentes. Test' Edwardo North, m'te, apud Westm' xx die Marci anno regni n'ri primo."

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CONVEYANCE OF CUSTOM OF WOOL TO JOHN STEDMAN, 1567.

*British Museum, Harley Charter 80, f. 31.*

"This indenture, made the xth day of februarye in the nyynth yere of the raigne of our Soueraigne Lady Elizabeth, by the grace of God Quene of England, france, and Ireland, defendour of the fayth, Betweene John Tomworth of London, Esquier, and William Dodington of the same Cytie, gentleman, of thone parte, And John Stedeman of Stratklere in the Countye of Cardigan, gent., of thother partie. Witnesseth, that where our said Soueraigne Lady the Quenes Majestie that nowc ys, by her graces Letters patentes vnder her greate Seale of England, beringe date at Northall, the xxxti day of July in the fyveth yere of her highnes raigne, gave and graunted vnto one William Horne, marchaunte of the Staple of Englande, amongst other thinges, All that Wooll comonly called Custome Wooll, yerely and from tyme to tyme comynge, growinge, or renewinge within the graungies of Meveneth, Comuscoith, Pen'neth, Blaynayron', and Enhmocke, in the countie of Cardigan, and by the Tenauntes of the same granges for a certayne custome yerely to be payed, then or late in the tenure of William David ap William, and to the late monasterie of Strataflorida, in the said countie of Cardigan, sometyne belonginge and apperteyninge and beinge parcell of the possessions and renewes of the same Late monasterie. To haue and to hold the said Wooll amonges other to the said William Horne, hys heyres and assignes, to the proper behoof and vse of the said William Horne, his heyres and

assignes for ever. To hold the said Wooll amonges other of our said Soueraigne Lady the Quene, her heyres and successours, of her highnes manor of Eastgrenewych, in the countie of Kent, by fealtie only, in fre Socage, and not in chief, as by the said lettres patentes, amonges other thinges, more playnelie appereth. And wheralso the said Wyllyam Horne, by his deede indented sufficient in the Lawe, beringe date the Last day of July, in the sayd fyveth yere of the Quenes Majestie raigue that nowe ys, hath bargayned and sold unto the said John Tomworthe and Wyllyam Dodington, and to the heyres and assignes of the said John Tomworth for ever, amonges other the said wooll, commonly called custome wooll, as by the same deede indented, beinge enrolled of record and enrolled in the Quenes Highnes Courte of Chauncerye, more at Lardge doth and maie appere That nowe the said John Tomworthe and Wyllyam Dodington, for and in consideracion of the Somme of threescore poundes of Lawfull money of England, to the said John Tomworth, before thensealinge and delyvery of these presentes by the said John Stedeman, well and truly payed, wherof the said John Tomworthe acknowledgeth hymselfe satisfied and payed, and therof and of every part therof doth clerely relees, acquite, and dischardge the said John Stedeman, his heyres and executours for ever, by these presentes hath bargayned and sold, and by these presentes dofullie andclerelic bargayne andsell vnto the said John Stedeman all theyre said wool, comonly called Custome wooll, yerely, and from tyme to tyme comynge, growinge, or renewinge withinthe aforesaid graunges of Mevenmeth, Tomuscoith, Pen'neth, Blanayron, and Euhmocke, in the said Countie of Cardigan, and by the tenautes of the same graunges, for a certaine Custome yerelic to be payed, nowe or late in the tenure of William David ap William, and to the Late monasterie of Strataflorida aforesaid, sometyme belonginge and apperteynyng and beinge parcell of the possessions and revenewes of the same late Monasterie: To haue, hold, and enjoy the sayd wooll vnto the said John Stidman, hys heyres and assignes, to thonlye use and behoufe of the same John Stidman, hys heyres and assignes for ever. To hold the sayd wooll of our said Soueraigne Ladie the Quene, her heyres and Successours, as of her highnes manour of Eastgrenewych, in the Countie of Kent, by fealtie only, in free socage, and not in Cheif, in as ample, Lardge, and beneficiall manner as the said William Horne had the same by vertue of the Quenes Majesties Lettres patentes aforesaid, or in as ample manner and fourme as the said John Tomworth, Wyllyam Dodington, and Wyllyam Horne, or any of them, nowe haue or ought to haue in the premysses, or any parte or

parcell of the Same. And the said John Tomeworth, for hym, his heyres and executours, covenau[n]teth and graunteth to and with the said John Stedeman, his heyres and assignes, by these presentes, in maner and fourme followinge, that ys to say, that he, the same John Tomeworth, and his heyres, and all and every other person and persons and theyr heyres nowe or hereafter justly Claymy[n]ge to haue any right, tytyle, or interest of inheritance, or other estate of, in, or to the said wooll from or by the said John Tomworthe, William Dodington, and William Horne and theyr heyres, shall from tyme to tyme duringe the space of two yeres nowe next cummy[n]ge after the date of these presentes, do cause and suffer to be don all and everie such reasonable and lawfull acte and actes, thinge and thinges, with warrantie against hym the said John Tomworthe and his heyres, and against the said William Dodington and William Horne and theire heyres, be hit, be fyne, feoffement, Recovery, deede or deedes enrolled, release or confirmacion, as by the said John Stedeman, his heyres or assignes, or by theyr or any of theyr Lered Counsell, and at the costes and chardges in the Lawe of the said John Stedeman, his heyres and assignes, shalbe reasonably devysed or advised to be don. And the said John Tomworth, for him, his heyres, executours, and administratours, doth couenaunte and graunte by these presentes to and with the said John Stedeman, his heyres and assignes, that the said wooll and every parcell therof bene at thensealinge hereof and from hensforth for ever hereafter shall continewe clere and clerly exonerated, dischardged, or saved harmlesse of and from all former bargaynes, Sales, gyftes, grauntes, Leases, comters, Dowers, Annuities, statutes, recognisaunces, and all other chardges and encumbrances whatsoever, had made or knowledged by the said John Tomeworth, William Dodington, and William Horne, or any of them or theyr assignes, or by any other person or persons, by theyr meanes, assent, or procurement. In Witnes wherof the parties aforesaid to these presente Indentures Entierchaungeably haue put to theyr Seales the day and yere aboue written.

(Signed) "JOHN STEDMAN."

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EXTRACT FROM "ARCHÆOLOGIA CAMBRENSIS", JAN. 1889.

"The following documents are transcripts of what are known as Particulars of Grants, forming portion of the records of the old Court of Augmentation and Surveyor-General, and now deposited at the Record Office. After the dissolution of the

monasteries a special department was created to deal with the various applications that were received for the grant or lease of the property that had accrued to the Crown. Such persons as were desirous of becoming purchasers were required to forward with their application a bill of particulars of the land for which they were in treaty, which had been drawn up by the Auditor of the Crown or his deputy. These particulars were examined by the Crown officers, and if necessary further inquiry was made as to the extent and survey of the lands, and the fines payable, or dues arising therefrom reserved to the Crown.

"The dues known by the name of *cymmortha* are by these documents shown to become a direct charge upon the properties, and payable to the sovereign to whom had reverted the seigniorial dues of the Welsh chieftains.<sup>1</sup>

"The first is the Bill of Particulars drawn up for a lease to be granted to Richard Broughton and two others, 'to the use of' Robert Earl of Essex, the unfortunate favourite of Queen Elizabeth. From these Particulars we gather that there had been a previous lease to the Earl's father, and a still earlier lease (probably the first after the seizure of the Abbey lands by the Crown) to his ancestor, Sir Richard Devereux; but it is believed that neither, certainly not the earlier, is now in existence.

"The second document is a grant of lands (probably the same) to the son of the executed Earl of Essex, to whom his father's title and estates were restored in 1603:

*"P'cell' terr' & Possession' nup' Monaster' de Strataflorida  
p'tinen'.*

"Com' Cardigan.

"Grangia de Mevenneth val' in—

"Redd' sive firm' divers' terr' ten'tor' et Hereditament' p'cell'  
Grangie p'd' sub Sigillo Conventual' d'e'i nup' Monast'ii div's  
p'sonis concess' p' termino div'sor' Annor' futur' p' Annum  
lxxixs. ijd.

"Redd' sive firm' div's terr' ten'tor' & Heredit' div's p'sonis  
ut dicit'r concess' sub Sigillo d'e'i nup' Monasterii sicut anno-  
tat'r in Comp'o de Anno xxxiiij<sup>o</sup> nup' R's Henrici octavi p'  
ann' xixli. xvs. iiijd.

"Redd' sive firm' div's terr' et Hereditamen' p'cell' Grangie

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<sup>1</sup> Seebohm's *Early Village Community*, p. 196.



p'd' prenobili Waltero Comiti Essex dimiss' p' termino Annor'  
adhuc futur' p' annum

*xli. xviijs. iiijl.*

"xxxiiiij*li.* xijs. ix*l.*<sup>1</sup>

"Quedam Consuetudo vocata Comortha val' in Denariis leva-  
bil' de sep'alib's Tenen' infra Grangias p'd' quol't tercio anno  
videl't de Havodwen vij*li.* xjs. viij*l.*, Blanarian vj*li.* viijs. iiiij*l.*,  
Pennarth *cs.*, Comustwith *xli.* vjs. viij*l.*,<sup>2</sup> Mevenneth *xli.* xiijs.  
viij*l.*, et Henhynock vj*li.* xiijs. iiiij*l.*

"in toto xxxviij*li.* xiijs. viij*l.*

"M'd' albeit this is payable but ev'y third yeere yet I place  
it heere because it is p'cell of the Travell for which the Bailifs  
fees have in tymes past been allotted and was reserved in the  
ould Leace<sup>3</sup> to S'r Richard Dev'oux to be paid quol't tercio anno  
as it hapned.

"M'd' according to the Warrant to me directed for the mak-  
ing of this p'ticular I have therein mencioned the value of such  
Land Tenements and Hereditaments within the said Countie  
(being not purchased) as wer dimized to S'r Richard Dev'oux,  
Knight, And have divided as before the Landes houlden by Con-  
vent Seale (few of which have lesse then xl<sup>tie</sup> yeres to come)  
from those letten to my Lord of Essex. And as for any being  
at will unlesse eny part of those vouched to be letten by Leases  
not seen be such, I knowe none.

"Also I have Reprised such fees as wer Reprised uppon the  
graunting of the said S'r Richard Dev'oux Lease according to  
the tenure of the said warrant. Also it is to be remembrid that  
the said Erle of Essex hath one Lease wherin is reserved xxv*li.*  
xvjs. ix*l.* p'cell of the said xxxvj*li.* viijs. graunted for xxj yeeres,  
whereof are endid xiiij yeeres at Michellmas ..... by which  
Lease the said Erll is to levie to the Queenes use yeerely c*ij*£  
viijs. viij*l.* and other ..... p'cell of the said possessions.

"Also there hath been answered by the said Erll uppon the  
sev'all Accompts sithence the Expiracio ... the Lease made to  
the said S'r Richard Dev'eux besides casualties iiiij<sup>xx</sup>vij*li.* xiijs.  
iiiij*l.* p'cell of the y.... value above mencioned. And there hath  
been respected yeerely as well in respect of the fees afore ... of

<sup>1</sup> The value at the time of the Dissolution is given as £34 : 3 : 2.

<sup>2</sup> This is an error for £2 : 6 : 8. The figures will then add cor-  
rectly.

<sup>3</sup> This is, no doubt, the first lease of the Abbey lands, or part of  
them, granted after they fell into the hands of the Crown. It was  
not in existence in 1868, when a Catalogue of the Particulars for  
Grants then at the Record Office was compiled, and it had probably  
perished before, when the above official copy was made.

div'se decaies and ov'charge alledgid by the said Erll xxxij*li*. amounting for vii yer'es endin ... Michelmas last to cexxiij*li*. w'ch by Survey could not hitherto be discied for that the said Officer specially instructid for those causes was forced to attend uppon his Lordship in Ireland whe... fittest tyme was for doing that service.

"Also if any new Demize be made of the premisses there must be speciall reservacion of the said some of xxxviij*li*. xiijs. viij*d*. for the Commorth aforesaid to be paid to the Queenes Majesties use in such yer'es as the same shall happen. Ffinally the said Erll desireth to have your Honors order touching the allowing of the said flees as well for tyme past as to come and he will uppon reasonable Respects to be alledged to yo'r Honors answer the rest.

"xxvj<sup>to</sup> Die Ffebruarii 1575.

"Ex'r p' Rob'tum Multon Deput. Audit."

"Make a Lease of the p'misses uppon surrender of a former Lease made unto Walter late Erl of Essex by the name of Walter Vicount Hereford unto the said Richarde Broughton, Thomas Newporte and Willyam Baroll to the use

xvij<sup>o</sup> Junii 1577 of the said Roberte nowe Erl of Essex for the terme of xxj<sup>tie</sup> yeares yealding to the p' Ric'o Broughton, Thoma Newporte et Quenes Ma'tie the yearlie rente aforeseid Will'mo Baroll ad of cxij*li*. and the aforeseid som'e of usu' p' nobil' Robt' xxxviij*li*. xiijs. viij*d*. for the Commortha Comit' Essex. aforeseid ev'y third yeare And painge to her Highnes the ffyne before mencioned.

"The Lease to have commencement from the Annunciacion of our Lady last past.

"The exeptionns Coven'ts and Condicionns in the Lease to be suche as in like cases is appointed.

"W. Burghley  
Wa. Mildmay."

*"P'cella Possessionu' nup' Monaster' de Strataflorida.*

"Com' Cardigan.

"Grang' de Havodwin, Blanarion, Penn'th, Comustwith, Mevemeth, Morvamaure, Hanniniock et Doverchen val't in

"Firm'o'i'm ill'Grang' de Havodwyn, Blanarian al's Blannarian, Pennarth, Comustwith, Mevenmeth, Morvamaure, Hanniniock al's Haninoock et Doverchen, cu' suis Jur' Membr' et p'tiu' univ'sis in Com' p'd'. Neenon tocius illius Consuetud' ib'm voc' le Comor-

tha levabil' de sep'al Tenen' infra Grang' p'd'. Neenon o'im et sing'lor' Denar' sum' exit Revenc' et p'fic' quor'eu'q' de temp'e in tempus p'ven' acciden' seu contingen' ac D'ne nup' Regine Eliz' hered' et successor' s' spectan' et p'tinen' dict' Grang' quolib't tercio anno levand' et solvend' s'c'd'm consuetud' p'rie ib'm p'ut antehac consuet' fuit attingen' ad sum' xxxviij*li*. xiijs. viij*l*. quolib't tercio anno. Ac etiam o'im et sing'lor' mess' Dom' Edific' structur' Horr' stabul' molend' columbar' Hort' pomar' gardin' terr' Ten't' Grang' prat' pasc' pastur' vast' camp'm bruer' Mor' Marisc' aquas aquar' curs' gurgit' Ripar' stagn' vinar' piscac' Redd' Rev'c' & s'vic' ac Redd' et annual' p'fic' quor'eu'q' res'vat' sup' quibuscu'q'. Dimiss' et concess' Neenon o'im et om'imod' Decim obvene' fruct' p'quiss' et p'fic' cur' Waviat' extrahur' H'iet't' Jur' Jurisdic' Privileg' Custum' Muletur' et Consuetud'. Ac o'n'm al' p'fic' comodit' advantag' emolumen' et Heredit' quor'eu'q' p'd' Grang' et ceter' p'miss' aut eor' alicui ullo m'o spectan' vel p'tin' aut cum eisd'm seu eor' aliquo vel aliquibus antehac usualit'r dimiss' locat' habit' cognit' accept' usitat' occupat' seu gavis' existen'. Que om'ia et sing'la p'miss' cum eor' p'tin' univ's scituan't'r jacent et existunt in d'co Com' Cardigan. Except' et om'io reservat' om'ib's et sing'lis H'iet't' extrahur' casualitat' p'quis' cur' grossis arbor bosc' subbosc' ward' maritag' miner' et quar' p'miss'. Ac advoc' eccl'iar' et capell' quar'cu'q' p'miss' p'd' seu alicui inde p'cell' ullo modo spectan' p'tin' vel incumben' sic (inter al') dimiss' Henrico Lindley Mi't' p' L'ras D'ne Elizabeth' nup' R'ne paten' Dat' xxvii<sup>o</sup> Die Novembr' Anno regni s' xliij<sup>to</sup> p' term'o xxj<sup>us</sup> annor' incipien' A ffecto S'c'i Mich'is Arch'i tunc ultim' p'ter Reddend' inde ann<sup>t</sup> ad ffest' Ann's b'te Marie Virgin' et S'c'i Mich'is Arch'i equal'r'i p' Redd' p'missor' exij*li*. Ac quolib't tercio A<sup>o</sup> ultra p' Comortha xxxviij*li*. xiijs. viij*l*. viz.

“Pro Redd' p' Ann' exij*li*.

“Ac ultra p'd' Redd' pro Comortha quolib't t'cio anno xxxviij*li*. xiijs. viij*l*.”

“Mr Attorney. Whereas his Ma'ty was pleased some 8 or 10 Months past to promise a Lease in reversion to the use of the yong Erle of Essex, to be granted to such persons as should be named, I have thought good hereby to require you, according to his Ma'tys gracious favour, to draw up a Booke for his Ma'ts Signature to the persons undernamed, leaving a Blanc for the number of yeares.

“Salisbury.

“15 Junii 1605.

“Owyn Sheppard, gent.

Henry Gerrard, gent.”

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*Extract from " Brut y Tywysogion", Rolls ed., pp. 245-249.*

" DEATH OF RHYS AP GRUFFYDD.

" 1197. The ensuing year there was a dreadful season of mortality over all the isle of Britain and the borders of France, so that innumerable of the common people died, and an immense number of the gentry and nobility. And in that troublous year did Atropos appear from among her sisters, who were formerly called the goddesses of destinies, with her maliciously malignant powers against that illustrious prince, in respect of whom neither the histories of Ystas the historian, nor the odes of Feryll the bard, could describe the extent of the lamentation and grief and misery that befel the whole nation of the Britons, when death, in that accursed year, broke the wheel of the destinies, to take the Lord Rhys, son of Gruffydd, on the fourth day of the calends of May, beneath its wings, under the subjected possession of death—the man who was the head and shield and strength of the South and of all Wales, and the hope and defence of all the tribes of the Britons—that man who was descended from the noblest line of kings, who was conspicuous for the extent of his race, and the energy of whose mind was assimilated with his race—the counsellor of the nobility, hostile against tyrants, the safety of the subjects, combatant upon the walls, an inciter in the wars, the arranger and ruler of the troops, the overthrower of hosts; and as a boar or a lion rushes onward, so raged his cruelty among his foes. Alas! for the glory of battles, the shield of the knights, the defence of the country, the ornament of weapons, the arm of strength, the hand of the generous ones, the eye of discrimination, the illustrator of courtesy, the summit of magnanimity, the substance of energy; like Achilles in the strength of his breast, Nestor in kindness, Tydeus in bravery, Sampson in strength, Hector in prudence, Hercules in gallantry, Paris in beauty, Ulysses in speech, Solomon in wisdom, Ajax in mind, and the foundation of all the excellencies—on the fourth of the calends of May. And here are the Latin metrical verses, which were composed when the Lord Rhys died:—

" "Nobile Cambrensis cecidit dyadema decoris,  
Hoc est Resus obit, Cambria tota gemit,  
Resus obit, non foma perit, sed gloria transit,  
Cambrensis transit gloria, Resus obit,  
Resus obit, decus orbis abit, laus quoque tepescit  
Ingeniitum vivit Cambria, Resus obit.  
Semper Resus obit populo quo virus amavit.

Lugent corda, tacent corpora, Resus obit.  
 Resus obit, vexilla cadunt regalia signa,  
 Hoc jam nulla levat dextera, Resus obit.  
 Resus obit, ferrugo tegit galeam, tegit ensem.  
 Arma rubigo tegit Cambria, Resus obit.  
 Resus abest, inimitus adest, Resus quia non est  
 Jam t . . . nil prodest Cambria, Resus abest.  
 Resus obit, populi plorant, gaudent inimici.  
 Anglia stat, cecidit Cambria, Resus obit.  
 Ora rigant elegi cunctis mea fletibus isti.  
 Cor ferit omne ducis dira sagitta necis,  
 Omnis lingua canit Reso præconia, nescit  
 Laudes insignis lingua tacere ducis.  
 Ploratu pleue vite laxantur habene,  
 Meta datur meri laus sine fine duci  
 Non moritur sed subtrahitur, quia semper habetur  
 Ipsius egregium nomen in orbe novum.  
 Camber Locrinus Reso rex Albaquenactus  
 Nominis et laudis inferioris erant.  
 Cesar et Arthurus, leo fortis uterque sub armis,  
 Nil par vel similis Resus utrique fuit,  
 Resus Alexander duelli pari fuit alter,  
 Mundum substerni glistit uterque sibi,  
 Occasus solis testus Resi fuit armis,  
 Sensit Alexandri solis in orbe manum,  
 Laus canit . . . sancto cantet ab omni  
 Celi laus regis debita spiritui.  
 Penna madet lacrimis quia scribit thema doloris  
 Ne careat forma littera cesset ea.'

"Here after that are the Latin metrical verses, which are in his praise on his tomb, and which were made after he had been buried :—

" ' Grande decus tenet iste locus, si cernitur ortus,  
 Siquis sit finis queritur ecce cinis.  
 Laudis amator honoris odor dulcedinis auctor,  
 Resus in hoc tumultu conditur exiguo.  
 Cesaries qui congeries solis radiorum  
 Principis et facies vertitur in cineres,  
 Hic tegitur, sed detegitur, quia fama perhennis  
 Non sinit illustrem voce latere ducem.  
 Colligitur tumba cinis hac, sed transvolat ultra  
 Nobilitas claudi nestia fune brevi,  
 Wallia jam viduata dolet, ruitur a dolore.' "

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## LIST OF ABBOTS OF STRATA FLORIDA.

- David, first abbot, died 1185.  
 Sissilus, Sitsýllt, or Cecil, witnesses Mailgwn's charter, 1198.  
 Kedivor, died 1225.  
 David, in confirmation charter Henry III, 1229 (described as Prior).  
 Gruffydd, makes peace with King Henry III, 1248.  
 Anian, witnesses Conan's charter, probably 1265.  
 Joab, died 1268.  
 Phillip Goch, thirteenth abbot, died 1280.  
 Einion Sais, succeeded Phillip Goch, and in his time the monastery was burnt, 1284-95.  
 Meredith, mentioned in charter Edward III, 1336.  
 Llewelyn Fychan ap Llewelyn, mentioned in charter 1369-79.<sup>1</sup>  
 Richard ap Gruffydd, 1407 (see *Archæologia Cambrensis*, 1848, vol. iii, p. 376).  
 John, petitions, 6 Henry VI, 1427-8.  
 (John ap Rees, Abbot of Conwy, claims abbacy, 1427-8 and 1442-3.)  
 Res, mentioned in petition, 21 Henry VI, 1442-3.  
 William Morys, also mentioned in petition, 21 Henry VI, 1442-3.  
 David, 1460-1490 (see *Archæologia Cambrensis*, 1848, vol. iii, p. 372).  
 Richard Talley, last abbot, grants lease of Gelynog Grange in 1520-21.  
 N.B.—Dates taken from *Brut y Tywysogion*, Rolls ed.

## NAME OF THE ABBEY.

I am indebted to the Rev. Canon Bevan for the following remarks on the derivation of the name of the abbey :

“ ‘Ystrad Flur’ and ‘Strata Florida’ are the same, one being the Latinised form of the other, and I take it that both the old and the later monasteries were equally be called Ystrad Flur and equally Strata Florida. In short, you have ‘Strat Flur’ as the designation of the later one in Rhys ap Gruffudd's charter (p. 50). The point is of some little historical value; because the application of the title ‘Ystrad Flur’ to a building *not* on the Flur, implies the existence of an earlier building of which it was the recognised successor.”

<sup>1</sup> A congratulatory poem to the Abbot Llewelyn Vychan, upon his recovery from a serious illness, is preserved in the *Myfyrian Archæology*, vol. i, p. 516 (see *Arch. Camb.*, 1848, vol. iii, p. 129).

## HERALDIC BEARINGS OF FOUNDERS OF STRATA FLORIDA.

The shield of Rhys ap Tewdwr, as given on page 1, is that usually attributed to himself and his descendants; the shield on page 40 is also given by some authorities as the armorial bearing of Rhys ap Gruffydd.

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## ARMS OF THE ABBEY.

The shield delineated on the cover is the arms of the abbey, taken from the conventual seal, illustrated on page 87. The shield in the base of the seal on the dexter side is that of the Abbey; that on the sinister side would be the armorial bearings of the abbot for whom it was made. It will be observed that his name has been obliterated in the legend on the seal.

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## ADDENDA ET CORRIGENDA.

NOTE.—On page 29, Owain ap Cadwgan is said to have “slain a certain Flemish Bishop”. The Rev. Canon Bevan remarks as to this:—

“I doubt whether William de Brabant was a *bishop*; he is otherwise described in the *Red Book of Hergest* as ‘henafgwr’, an old man, or alderman.”

Page 19, line 9, *for* Maelenydd, *read* Maelienydd.

Pages 43, 45, and 47, *for* Gruffydd ap Rhys, *read* Rhys ap Gruffydd.

Page 124, line 6, *dele* “the course of”.

Page 134, line 5, *for* Throkesberia, *read* Theokesberia.

Page 150, line 25, *for* “the sentence”, *read* “David”.

Page 176, line 20, *for* (see plate, p. 87), *read* p. 200.

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